

THE DOWNS COMMITTEE

Clifton and Durdham Downs (Bristol) Act 1861

To : Members of the
Downs Committee

Reply To: Jeremy Livitt
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Date : Friday 18th January
2019

The Lord Mayor and 6 City Councillors

The Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor Councillor Cleo Lake
(Chair)

Peter Abraham,
Donald Alexander
Barry Clark
Christopher Davies
Kye Dudd
Paula O'Rourke

The Master and 6 Merchant Venturers

| | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Antony Kenny | Ross Ancell |
| Jonathon Baker | Simon Cooper |
| Francis Greenacre | Mary Prior |
| Tim Ross | |

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Dear Member,

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **Downs Committee** to be held at **2.00 pm on Monday, 28th January, 2019 in The Writing Room - City Hall, College Green, Bristol, BS1 5TR.**

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

Yours sincerely,

Jeremy Livitt

Agenda

- 1. Welcome, Introductions and Safety Information**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting - Monday 19th November 2018 (Pages 6 - 10)**
- 4. Declarations of interest**

To note any Declarations of Interest made by Councillors.

- 5. Public Forum (Pages 11 - 13)**

To consider items of Public Forum sent to the Downs Committee. Interested parties can submit a written statement of approximately one side of A4 to the Downs Committee by sending it to Democratic Services **by no later than 12pm on Friday 25th January 2019.**

Please find attached a statement from Robert Westlake (Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge)

- 6. Cycling Provision Alongside A4018 (Steven Riley, Richard Goldthorpe. Ed Plowden)**

A written report on this item is not yet available and will be sent out next week when available.

- 7. Leisure Loop (Pages 14 - 17)**

There will be a presentation of approximately 15 minutes by Vicky Cracknell on this item, following which there will be a 5-minute period to answer questions.

- 8. Matters Arising From the Events and Finance Sub-Group (Pages 18 - 19)**

9. Event Schedule (Ann-Marie Leighton) (Pages 20 - 23)

Please note that two appendices for this report contain exempt information and are therefore only available to Downs Committee members.

10. Finance Update (Jemma Prince) (Pages 24 - 26)

Please note that part of this report contains exempt information and is therefore only available to Downs Committee members.

11. Downs Maintenance Report (Ben Skuse) (Pages 27 - 35)

Please note that, as indicated in the final paragraph of this report, the Downs Committee is requested to make a decision concerning the installation of further lighting units on the path leading up onto Observatory Hill.

12. Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project Annual Report 2018 (Becky Belfin and Mandy Leivers) (Pages 36 - 41)

This item will include a presentation of ten minutes, followed by five minutes of questions.

13. The use of land off Ladies Mile 2018 Annual Report to the Downs Committee - Bristol Zoological Gardens (Pages 42 - 48)

14. Update - Health and Future of the Downs Football League (Councillor Kye Dudd)

Councillor Kye Dudd will speak on this item at the meeting.

15. Any Other Business

Sea Walls Café – The Lord Mayor has requested further information on this issue at the meeting.

16. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for to be held at **2pm on Monday 8th April 2019 in the Writing Room, City Hall, College Green, Bristol.**

Issued By:

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Bristol City Council Minutes of the Downs Committee

19 November 2018 at 2.00 pm



Members Present:-

Councillors: Councillor Cleo Lake (Chair), Councillor Peter Abraham, Councillor Donald Alexander, Councillor Barry Clark, Councillor Kye Dudd, Councillor Christopher Davies, Councillor Paula O'Rourke, Antony Kenny (Vice-Chair), Ross Ancell, Jonathon Baker, Francis Greenacre, Mary Prior and Tim Ross

Officers in Attendance:-

Oliver Harrison, Melissa Inman, Jemma Prince, Ben Skuse, Mandy Leivers

1. Apologies and introductions

All present introduced themselves for the benefit of the new committee members

Apologies were received from Simon Cooper

2. Membership for 2018/19

Membership was noted as correct

3. Chairing Arrangements

Chairing Arrangements were noted

4. Retiring Members

Charles Griffiths and James McArthur were noted as retiring members.

ACTION OH to send letter of thanks

5. Dates and Times for Upcoming Meetings

The dates and times for upcoming meetings were noted.



ACTION OH to circulate timetables and electronic diary invitations

6. Delegations

Delegations were noted

7. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting 24 September 2018 were accepted as a true record.

8. Declarations of interest

Ross Ancell declared an interest as a member of Quartet Community Foundation, who are coordinating the funds for the proposed Sea Walls Café development.

9. Public Forum

Susan Carter from Downs for People introduced a public statement

DfP is disappointed about lack of action on zoo parking over the past 10 years. Concerned about Downs Committee being secretive as zoo parking has been discussed openly in the past. DfP are hoping to meet with the Lord Mayor to discuss the principles.

The LM said it was inaccurate to say the last public statement from DfP was ignored.

TR reminded committee that public statements are not required to be debated. He gave a short update on zoo parking, having met recently with the new zoo director. A meeting of the finance group has also happened, where 2 members of that group have been delegated to progress negotiations with the zoo. DC will have to ratify the decision once a draft agreement is in place.

10 Matters Arising from Events and Finance Group

Report was noted

11 Future Proof Parks - Ground Works

Charley Murrell from Groundwork gave a presentation on Futureproofing Parks.

National Lottery Funding has been secured for the project, and CM has been discussing possible activities with FODAG, Ben and Mandy. CM would like approval to work on the Downs.



Questions were asked about the funding and how it was being distributed over the four Bristol parks. The funding goes to Groundworks, who then work with the friends groups of each park to increase engagement of young people.

Members agreed that the objectives of the project were very positive, but were curious about what would happen in practical terms and how the Downs Committee would be involved. CM will recruit young people locally to develop projects on the Downs e.g. maintenance of certain areas that DC cannot currently do themselves.

Members agreed with the principle of the project, but would need an outline of well-defined project proposals for the Downs to examine.

Members asked for a copy of the bid document to see what the parameters are. There is not currently much work being done on preserving heritage in parks, which would be complementary to the wildlife activity that currently exists. It is about filling the gaps we don't currently cover. There have been public enquiries about a history programme, so this presents a good opportunity. Heritage is core to the lottery funding, so we should be mindful that is the priority and that funders are likely to check this.

It was RESOLVED that CM and Groundworks continue to work with BS and ML to develop some projects for the Downs, then report back to committee.

12 Downs Management Report

MI confirmed that the circus tender has been awarded.

ACTION OH to circulate details of successful tender to all DC members

The organisers of Bristol Pride presented a proposal to the events sub group it was recommended to full committee that approval for the event is given approval in principle. All subject to agreement of fees and site permission and licensing approval.

Team Love organisers also presented and the sub group recommend that committee approve the principle of a 3 year licence for a 2 day music event, with an annual check on site permissions and fees. All subject to agreement of fees and site permission and licensing approval.

Events team to continue to take forward further discussions with the organisers.

RECOMMENDATION APPROVED

Avon Gorge & Downs Wildlife Project Education Programme Update



ML gave a summary of the busy autumn period. The audience development plan projects have been very successful. The last two refugee family sessions have been held, including an evaluation. Went well with some fantastic feedback from the adult participants. Children have created a book about what to do on the Downs, which they have taken back to the refugee centre to encourage others to visit. The final Downs Challenge sessions were also held, including a 'Brave the dark' event where the children found out about bats and moths. The children also created a display to share what they learnt during the project with visitors to St Paul's learning centre.

Maintenance Update

More grass cutting has been needed due to warm weather. The Wild Place zoo project has requested evergreen foliage to feed their giraffes. Fortunately for them an oak tree has fallen recently, so they can have that. BS will be visiting the granny Downs soon with BCC tree team to make an assessment. There is another possible restructure of BCC parks team, BS will keep us updated. Owners of the observatory want some building work done to create a café at the rear of the structure. This will fence off the middle footpath to the observatory for the next 3 weeks. Not ideal but preserves the grass. Nov 27 is likely start date. Observatory also has plans to increase lighting in the area to support evening events. The Sea Walls fencing requires repair work. The Granny Downs will have a tree trail launched in spring 2019, which fits in with the extant trails.

13 Delegated and Upcoming Events Proposed on The Downs

There was no change to the proposed 2019 event schedule.

14 Finance Report

JP presented the latest 6 month budget position, which is on track for a balanced position. JP will begin drafting a proposal budget for 19/20 soon.

15 FODAG Update

Report was noted

16 Any Other Business

Some members have been asked by residents how to collect foliage such as holly and ivy from the Downs. BS confirmed they can take a reasonable amount for themselves.

A vote of thanks was given for Richard Bland, who has recently died. He was a naturalist that made many contributions to the Downs.



Members requested that copies of the FODAG newsletter be available for DC meetings. ACTION OH to follow up.

17 Cycling Schemes

POR introduced a paper on cycling proposals for the Downs. This proposal initially went to the finance group due to the principle of a cycle hire scheme generating income. POR requested that the place and movement group meet to examine possibilities and report back to full committee in January. Would like to re-energise momentum on leisure cycling on the Downs.

Members discussed the large amount of work that was produced by the place and movement framework in 2015/16. Some principles were agreed, but the difficulty was a lack of funding. Included in the work was an examination of possible funding / grants that could be available. The Seven Sisters loop is progressing as funding is available via the A4018 highway project. Members were concerned about duplicating or repeating work.

There was agreement that in the 2 years since the framework was produced, there may be other options available to explore and a more secure financial position. There is community interest about the Cribs Causeway development and how that impacts on Falcondale Road. There is also a group that wants to close the circular road to traffic. The framework showed an appetite for cycling on the Downs within limited parameters. This would probably require modification of existing bye laws.

It was RESOLVED that transport colleagues should be briefed on the committee's intentions and report to the next committee in January. A place and framework group meeting should be convened as soon as possible after this.

Meeting ended at 3.15 pm

CHAIR _____





Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge

January 2019

FOD+AG welcomes the opportunity to update the Downs Committee on our most recent activities and some of the events planned for the coming months.

FOD+AG is committed to representing our members and all legitimate users of the Downs and to support the Downs Committee and the City Council in the good governance of the Downs.

In November our members gathered at Redland Bowling club for the Annual General Meeting.

As dictated by our constitution the committee stood down and agreed to stand for re-election for the coming year. FODAG members appointed the new committee unopposed.

The formal part of the evening generated some lively debate and concluded with presentations from our two guest speakers.

Following an addition to our constitution members agreed to the creation of the role of Honorary President. This allowed the chair to propose that this title be offered to retiring chair Jack Penrose.

The Star Party planned for December was unable to take place due to heavy cloud cover.

A FODAG member has asked for support for a proposal to improve road safety provision at Stoke Road. This would include traffic calming measures and the construction of a traffic island located near to Café Retreat. FODAG recognises that crossing the road at this point can be hazardous particularly for older citizens and parents with pushchairs.

The Downs supervisor has indicated that there is some minor damage to the roof of the Haven shelter. FODAG members will investigate and if possible, repair the roof as part of our winter maintenance programme. Members have also been supporting the homeless lady that uses the shelter and over Christmas checked on her welfare and ensured she was adequately supplied.

Members continue with regular winter projects including deep litter clearance, goat monitoring and conservation projects.

As discussed at the November meeting FODAG will arrange for all members of the Downs Committee to receive electronic copies of our quarterly Newsletter.

Should any member of the Downs Committee be inclined to contribute an article for publication submissions would be most welcome.

FODAG member Paul Wood led a walk and talk to discover the source of the New Hotwell.

This year we are planning a Downs themed photographic competition. We are in discussion with AXA for the possible use of their office building for exhibiting submitted work.

During the coming year it is our intention to agree a set of outcomes which will more clearly define our role as an organisation. The intention is to consider how best to support the Downs Committee going forward and will take account of possible rapidly changing external factors.

Earlier in the month FODAG members gathered for a memorial service at [Clifton College Chapel](#). The service was to celebrate the life of our vice chair Richard Bland.

FODAG along with other groups that Richard was associated with will be considering a way to recognise the contribution Richard made, not just to the Downs but to the City.

FODAG has commented in support of the planning application for the Circular Road Café development but with some reservations. Members have raised concerns about overall design in relation to the status of the area, the choice of appropriate materials, security at night, opening hours and the safe operation of the upper deck.

As an organisation dedicated to the preservation of the Downs we are pleased to see that the William Hind listed drinking fountain is to be incorporated into the overall design

FODAG acknowledges the requirement to generate income to sustain future activities including the maintenance of the public toilet.

At the last meeting FODAG expressed concern that the listed urinal at Blackboy Hill had been closed and urged the Committee to reinstate this important facility as a matter of urgency.

Can the Committee confirm that there is still an intention to do so and if so when?

Proposal for a Car-Free Leisure Loop on Clifton Downs

Cycle Sunday, January 2019

“There is an appetite to develop utility and recreational cycling and pedestrian access to the Downs, including options to reconfigure the highways and changes to the open Downs by enhancing existing facilities and creating new ones. The result should be greater connection with the city, enhanced user experience, as well as contributing to reduced car dependence.”

Downs Committee Draft Vision, March 2016.

Clifton Downs: A new approach to sharing space

This proposal outlines a car-free leisure loop around the Downs for walkers, runners, people riding bikes, and those using wheel chairs, mobility vehicles or prams. The loop would involve adding a section of new shared-use path, reconstructing the path next to Ladies Mile and reconfiguring Circular Road. It would improve access to, and enjoyment of, the Downs by all those who would like to explore it without needing a car, thereby encouraging active leisure and reducing congestion.

The proposed loop would be 2.3 miles in length and would run along Rockleaze and Downleaze, Circular Road, Ladies Mile and a short section of Stoke Road.

Why it is needed?

The popularity of the Downs as a place to visit, walk, run and cycle is well established. This popularity does lead to a number of management issues including erosion, as people follow “desire lines”.

The success of Cycle Sunday over the past four years and increase in popularity of cycling in Bristol both point to an unmet demand for greater safe access to the Downs by bike. A new leisure loop would also complement the proposal to build a café at the Sea Walls, encouraging people to arrive at the café on foot or by bike thereby helping to reduce motor traffic.

The scheme fits well with the aims of Bristol City Council in terms of improving public health and sustainable transport.

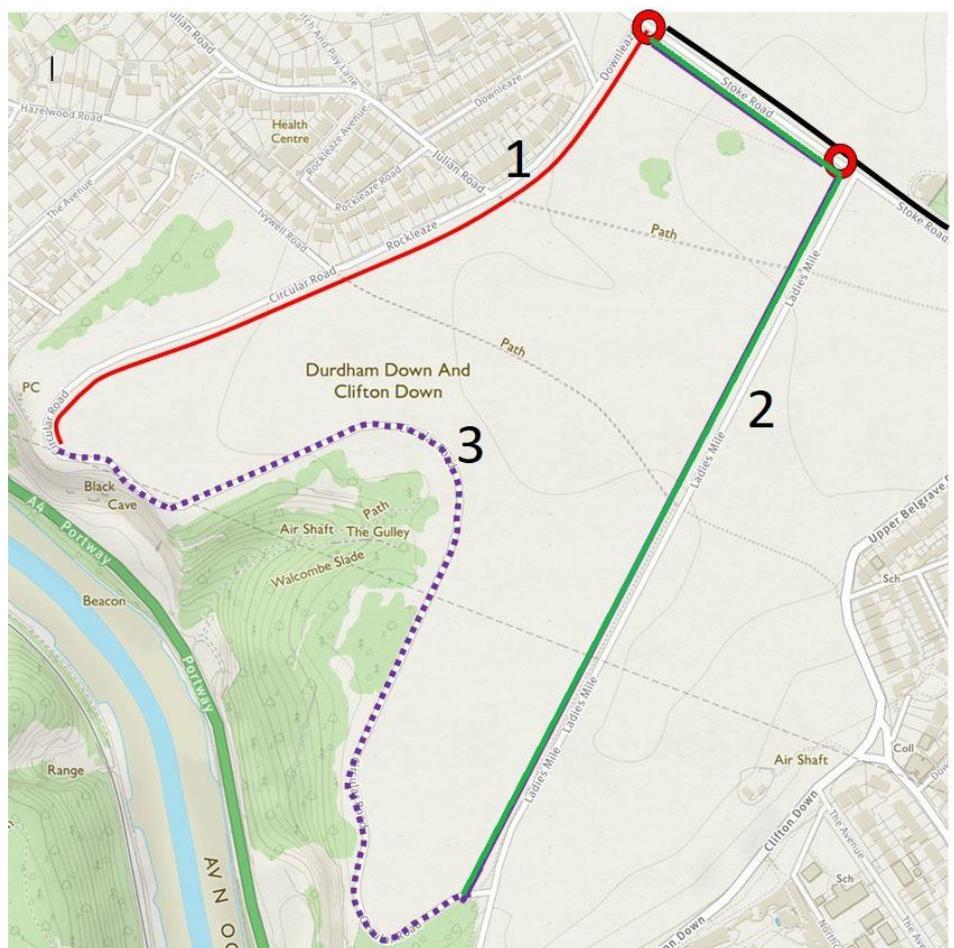


Figure 1 Map of proposed loop

Over the past few years, the Downs Committee has discussed options for improved pedestrian and cycling access to the area for the people of Bristol, but until now with no tangible outcomes.

There are shared-use leisure paths in comparable large parks elsewhere in the country. For example, Richmond Park, which now has a seven-mile shared path which runs near its perimeter. It was designed for recreation and with consideration for the landscape of the historic park.



Figure 2 Richmond Park

The Proposal

With sensitive attention to design, particularly signage and surfacing, the leisure loop could be developed in keeping with the landscape and ecology of the Downs, significantly enhancing the experience of those visiting it. The loop can be described in three sections:

Section 1: Downleaze and Rockleaze to the Seawalls.

Formalising the existing “desire line” made by walkers and runners, this would be a new 1km shared-use path, parallel to Rockleaze and Downleaze and leading to the Seawalls. For people with prams and those in wheelchairs, this would provide a safer and more attractive alternative to the footpath along Downleaze and Rockleaze which has many driveways and two roads to cross.

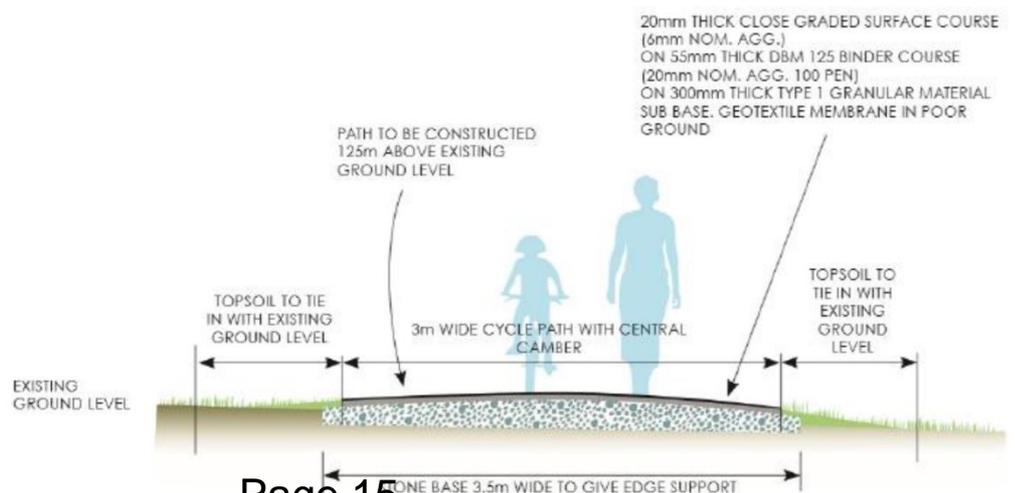
At the Seawalls, dropped kerbs would enable cyclists to join Circular Road and help people with prams and in wheelchairs to cross to the existing footpath on the other side of the road.

The path would be 3m wide to accommodate both pedestrians and people on bikes. Signs would make it clear that this was a shared space.

If the path were built from tarmac with a buff coloured high friction surface, the cost to build this section would be approximately £150,000. This surface would be hard wearing and sympathetic to the locality.



Figure 3 Downleaze and Rockleaze



Section 2: Ladies Mile and Stoke Road

The existing, uneven path on the west side of Ladies Mile could be reconstructed to form a shared-use path for pedestrians and cyclists. Its design could reference the promenade feel of the avenue and the path could be routed to minimize the need to cut down scrub or trees. Its design and construction would mirror that of the path alongside Downleaze and Rockleaze.

Finally, the broad footpath along the south side of Stoke Road would be widened and made into a shared-use path. This would join up with the Rockleaze section of the loop. Construction costs for this section of the loop would be approximately £190,000.

Section 3: Circular Road.

Our ambition is for Circular Road to complete the leisure loop. There are a range of options:

- Car-free Sundays (temporary closures of Circular Road)
- Physical traffic calming measures
- Circular Road being made one way
- Closing Circular Road (keeping vehicle access to the Seawalls from Rockleaze)

One-way option: Changing the road priority to make it one way for motor traffic would free-up existing road space to allow a two-way segregated cycle route with no new hard surfaces. The current parking would be retained. A good quality pavement for pedestrians already exists along Circular Road. Decisions about the direction of traffic flow would be based on traffic assessments of current usage of the road and suitability of the junctions at either end.



Figure 5 Ladies Mile

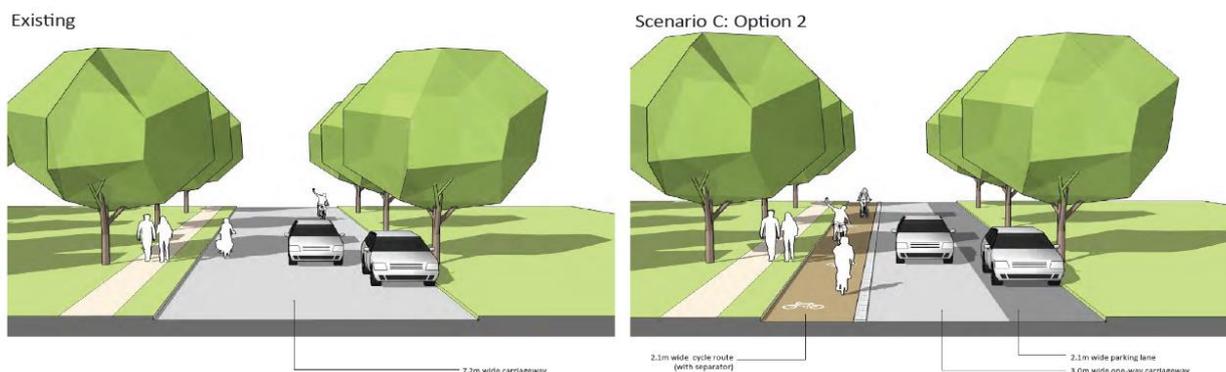


Figure 6 Circular Road – Existing

Circular Road – One-way to motorized traffic

Traffic calming: There have been on-going concerns about some drivers speeding on Circular Road. In order to enforce the 20-mph limit, physical traffic calming measures could be installed. One example would be flat top speed tables that are effective at slowing cars as it is not possible to “straddle” them.

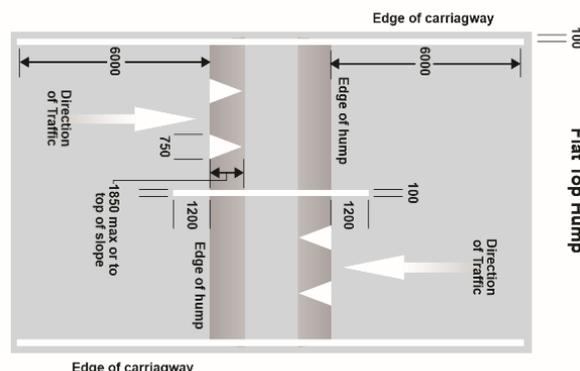


Figure 7 Flat Top Speed Table

Zebra Crossing on Stoke Road

The two sides of the Downs are currently separated by Stoke Road. Its traffic volumes, high kerbs and parked cars make crossing difficult. Many people do cross Stoke Road near the Water Tower/Café Retreat despite the lack of a crossing. A zebra crossing could be installed near the top of Ladies Mile and would make a great difference to accessibility. A zebra crossing with beacons would cost approximately £20,000.

Bike Hire

The Downs is a city-wide resource. We are proposing a bike hire business at the Water Tower/Café Retreat. This would enable people to arrive by bus on Stoke Road and then explore the Leisure Loop on a hired bike. We have been speaking to Jake Voelcker from Bristol Bicycles (some of you may have ridden one of their bikes at our Cycle Sunday events). They are very interested in working with the management of Café Retreat on a joint venture.

Next steps

We are really pleased to have the opportunity to present this proposal to the Downs Committee and would welcome the opportunity to have a more in-depth discussion with members of the Place and Movement sub-group at their next meeting.

We are working with Greenways and Cyclerooutes Ltd on this proposal. It is a charitable community benefit society. It supports groups like Cycle Sunday to develop new walking and cycling paths and was founded by John Grimshaw and Caroline Levett (Former Chief Executive and longstanding board member of Sustrans respectively). John has engineered many traffic free paths, starting with the Bristol and Bath railway path back in 1979. Brean Down Way and Waddesdon Greenway (near Aylesbury) are two recent completed projects.

Greenways can help us get this proposal developed and ready for planning. They have a proven track record for fundraising for projects such as this one and we will work with them to secure a small grant for the development phase and larger capital grants for the build.

References

City Design Group: *Downs Place and Movement Framework*. November 2015. Figures 2,3,6

Department for Transport: *Local Transport Note 07/1 - Traffic Calming*. March 2007. Figure 7

Greenways and Cyclerooutes Ltd <https://greenwaysandcyclerooutes.org/become-a-supporter/>

<http://www.johngrimshawassociates.co.uk/> Figures 1 & 4

Sustrans: *Cycling on Clifton and Durdham Downs*. June 2014

This proposal was written by Vicki Cracknell and Johnny Wood (Cycle Sunday) with advice from Greenways and Cyclerooutes and from Sustrans.

Downs Committee Matters Arising Events & Finance Sub Group Meeting 9th January 2019 at 3.00 pm

Below is a precis of matters that were discussed at the Events and Finance Sub-Group. Note that confidential items discussed within this group cannot be published. For Events, Maintenance and Finance updates see their respective reports in this pack.

Finance

Bristol City Council's contribution to the Downs Committee would continue to be reduced with the aim of the latter being self-funding from next year onwards. The figures would be correlated as required to match as closely as possible the costs associated with events. It was agreed that a purchase order for Mandy Leivers for £7,500 can now be raised. Any underspend at the year end is to be moved to the Downs Reserve. If internal transaction thresholds prevent this then as an alternative a further commitment to Mandy Leivers for 2019 can be accrued up to the threshold value.

Proposed Future Events 2018

The Events and Finance Sub Group met on Wednesday 9th January 2019 and discussed a number of applications for proposed events on the Downs in relation to Bristol Pride, Team Love, Glow in the Park and a proposed fireworks display. Between now and the next full committee meeting the following events are due to take place:

- Funderworld will be returning to the Downs in 2019. They will set up 25th March to 4th April 2019. The event will run 5th to 28th April 2019. Breakdown dates will be 29th April to 3rd May 2019.
- NEW event Glow Run is a running event where partakers make their way around a lit circuit, beginning at dusk. The set up date is 11th April 2019. The event will take place on 13th April 2019. The breakdown will happen on 14th April 2019.
- A full 2019 event schedule will be produced as an appendix (exempt as it contains commercially sensitive information) in the Events report for the Downs Committee

Agreed Addition To The Previous Set of Events and Finance Group Minutes (13th November 2018) – Ice Cream Tender

The following update was agreed to be made to the minutes of the above meeting.

1. The Downs Committee are giving permission (under the byelaw) for permission to trade on the three existing pitches (stating any conditions that might apply).

2. The Merchant Venturers will need to give permission to trade as land owners for the pitch on Observatory Road and are happy with the conditions approved by the Downs Committee.

Installation of Two New Lighting Units to the Observatory

It was noted that permission was being sought from Historic England and Natural England for the above. A report would be submitted to the Downs Committee on 28th January 2019.

Funderworld

The organisers had expressed concern at the loss of income at the 2018 event due to adverse weather conditions.

Café Sea Walls – Planning Application

This had now been submitted. It was anticipated it would go to Bristol City Council's Development Control Committee in February 2019.

Zoo Parking Parameters

A formal request had been made about the zoo requesting a meeting to discuss proposals for future arrangements beyond 1st April 2019. Further detail would be provided at the forthcoming Downs Committee, following which there would be further guidance at the subsequent Events and Finance Sub Group. Legal advice was being sought concerning a recent Freedom of Information request made by the zoo.

Ice Cream Tender

A tender invoice had now been received. Whilst the tendering process had been delayed, it was not anticipated that this would affect the commencement target date of 1st April 2019.

Proposed Events 2019 - Overview

- Funderworld will be returning to the Downs in 2019. They will be onsite from the 25th March until the 3rd May.
Set up dates: 25th March-4th April
Operating dates: 5th to 28th April
Breakdown dates: 29th April to 3rd May
- NEW event Glow Run is a running event where partakers make their way around a lit circuit, beginning at dusk. They will be onsite from 11th-14th April.
Set up date: 11th April
Operating date: 13th April
Breakdown Date: 14th April
- Foodies Festival will be on the Downs from the 7th-14th May.
Set up dates: 7th - 9th May
Operating dates: 10th to 12th May
Breakdown dates: 13th to 14th May
- The Lady Boys of Bangkok will be returning and will be onsite from 4th-20th June.
Set up dates: 4th to 6th June
Operating dates: 7th to 18th June
Breakdown dates: 19th to 20th June
- Race for Life will be returning to the Downs in 2019 and will be onsite from 28th June-1st July
Set up date: 28th June
Operating dates: 29th and 30th June
Breakdown dates: 1st July
- Tough Mudder 10k will be onsite from 4th-6th July.
Set up date: 3rd to 4th July
Operating dates: 5th and 6th July
Breakdown Dates: 7th July
- NEW Rotary Event – we are in discussions about bringing a new rotary event to the Downs on 6th July 2019. This will work alongside Tough Mudder, which will be taking place on the same day.
- Bristol Pride – We are still in negotiations with Bristol Pride around fees. The Events & Finance sub group have made a final offer to Bristol Pride and we await an answer.
Proposed dates –
Set up date: 10th to 12th July
Operating dates: 13th July
Breakdown dates: 14th to 15th July
- The Downs Concert proposed dates as follows. The event organisers have requested an additional day this year, for which we are in negotiation around fees.
Set up date: 23rd to 30th Aug
Operating dates: 31st Aug to 1st Sept
Breakdown dates: 3rd to 8th Sept

- The Student Union Welcome Fair will be operating in September 2019.
Set up dates: 20th to 26th September
Operating date: 27th September
Breakdown dates: 28th Sept to 2nd Oct
- The new circus tender has been awarded to Tony Hopkins Entertainments. They will be taking over from the Moscow State Circus, and have brought shows to the Downs in past years. Exact dates to be confirmed.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted



The Downs

Proposed Budget 2019/20

The table below shows the summary Budget for 2018/19 and proposed summary Budget for 2019/20:

| | 2018/19 Full Year Budget £ | 2019/20 Full Year Budget £ | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| <u>Income</u> | | | |
| Total Income | 268,559 | 355,830 | |
| | | | |
| <u>Expenditure</u> | | | |
| Total Expenditure | (384,838) | (355,830) | |
| Income Less Expenditure | (116,279) | - | |
| Plus: | | | |
| Council Contribution | 100,000 | - | |
| Net Position | (16,279) | - | Representing Downs generated surplus/(shortfall) against the relevant year's total saving (for 18/19 this is £162k and for 19/20 this is £262k) |

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

Downs Maintenance Report

As we look towards Spring, happily ground conditions on the Downs are favourable. This is helpful as it allows for more accessibility and as a result greater productivity. Being able to go to all parts of the Downs without the fear of getting stuck is always helpful in this line of work! but is not always the case at this time of year.

Our normal programme of duties continues, weekly football pitch provision, litter clearance and daily goat monitoring to name but a few.

We have another 5 weeks to go with the scrub management plan before we cease this work due to the onset of nesting bird season. We are making significant progress in increasing the meterage of areas that can be accessed by the hay cut. In this way we get more grass into the annual hay cut regime and we help to give pockets of limestone grassland habitats a chance to survive the ever present threat of being lost to scrub/woodland.

From now and across the Spring the team will be repainting and refurbishing our bench stock on the Downs. The team will be helped in this area by community payback workers. It is useful to have this extra resource to allow for a greater proportion of our circa 115 benches on the Downs to be worked on.

The bespoke carved bench that was commissioned to sit in the children's playground in Clifton has been cleaned and given a new coat of varnish.

I have had meetings with the organiser of the Glow run (a new event for this year) and with the Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife project. The latter meeting was to look at the implementation of the new tree trail on the Granny Down. The team will be assisting with any works needed for this to unveiled later this year.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Members may have noticed a medium sized rock fall event in the Bridge Valley Rd area. Engineers from WSP have been in attendance. We await the outcome of their report for more information on what actions may be required going forward to manage this. For now we have closed off access to the footpath that leads between the steps at the bottom of Bridge Valley Rd and the Promenade in Clifton.

Yesterday the team (myself included) carried out the first of 3 consecutive Sundays of scheduled work to cut back vegetation and trees to allow for rock and structural inspections to take place. We follow with the 3rd and 10th of February to finish this work. Please note that Bridge Valley Rd will be closed to traffic on those dates, between 8am and 4pm.

The owner of the Observatory seeks final permission from the committee to install further lighting units on the path leading up onto Observatory Hill. He has the various assents needed and has sourced units that closely match the ones already to be found on the surrounding Christchurch Green. He intends to use a contactor approved by Historic England. There is no start date in place yet as he wants this final sign off before commencing.

CLIFTON OBSERVATORY



Lighting on Path Proposal

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Lighting on Path proposal – Clifton Observatory

On behalf of The Clifton Observatory we would like to add additional lighting to the path leading down from The Observatory to the main road. We are specifically looking at the dense wooded section of the path that is dark for pedestrians to walk back to the main road on an evening after leaving The Observatory.

Therefore we would like to propose the following:-

- Proposed to use matching lamps to those already existing on The Downs to ensure in keeping with the area.
- The lamps would be spaced in line with the current lights – 30 yards apart.
- Clifton Observatory will cover the costs and implementation.
- Location – path ½ - at 30 yard intervals, up to the intersection with path 5 (see below) – so no lighting on the top section
- Historic and Natural England sign off – see in this document.

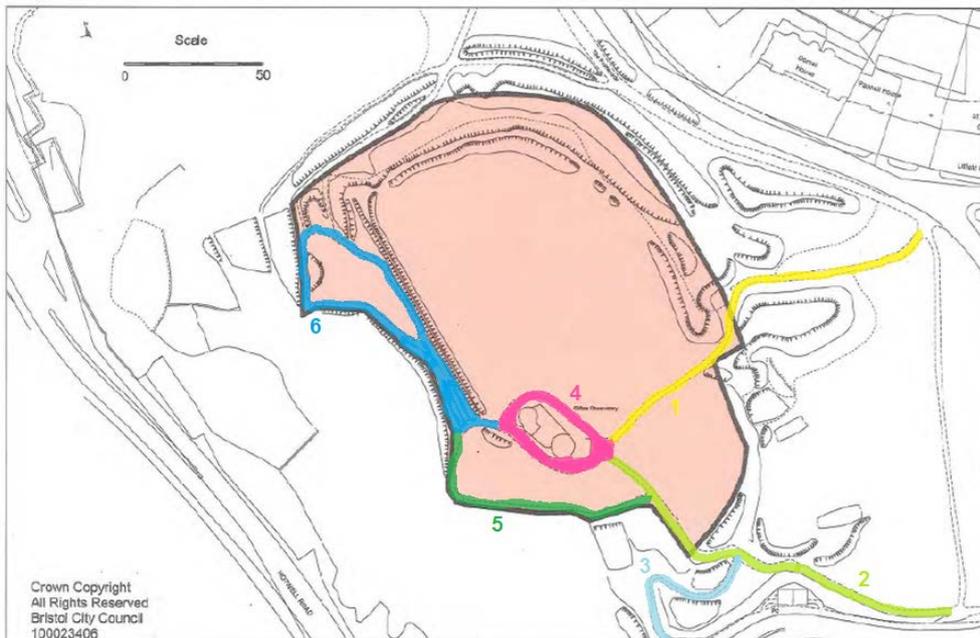


Fig.18 Extent of Scheduled Ancient Monument SAM 29 (BCC)

Lighting on Path proposal – Clifton Observatory

Consent from Historic England – Email

From: Barge, Melanie [<mailto:Melanie.Barge@HistoricEngland.org.uk>]
Sent: 05 December 2017 11:57
To: Ian Johnson <ian@sixdegs.com>
Cc: Souter, Samuel <Samuel.Souter@HistoricEngland.org.uk>
Subject: RE: Observatory - Path to the Observatory

Dear Ian

Sorry for the delay in getting back to you on this. I've discussed it with Samuel and we have no concerns, it looks like a good solution. The works will need scheduled monument consent but the archaeological contractor will know this and be able to apply on your behalf. Are you still looking to use Wessex?

All the best

Mel Barge (Ms)
Inspector of Ancient Monuments
Planning Group
29 Queen Square, Bristol, BS1 4ND
Direct Line: 0117 9751300 Mobile: 07795 665657

<https://historicengland.org.uk/southwest>

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Lighting on Path proposal – Clifton Observatory

Location of existing lighting



The above is Path 1 in yellow on the below diagram.

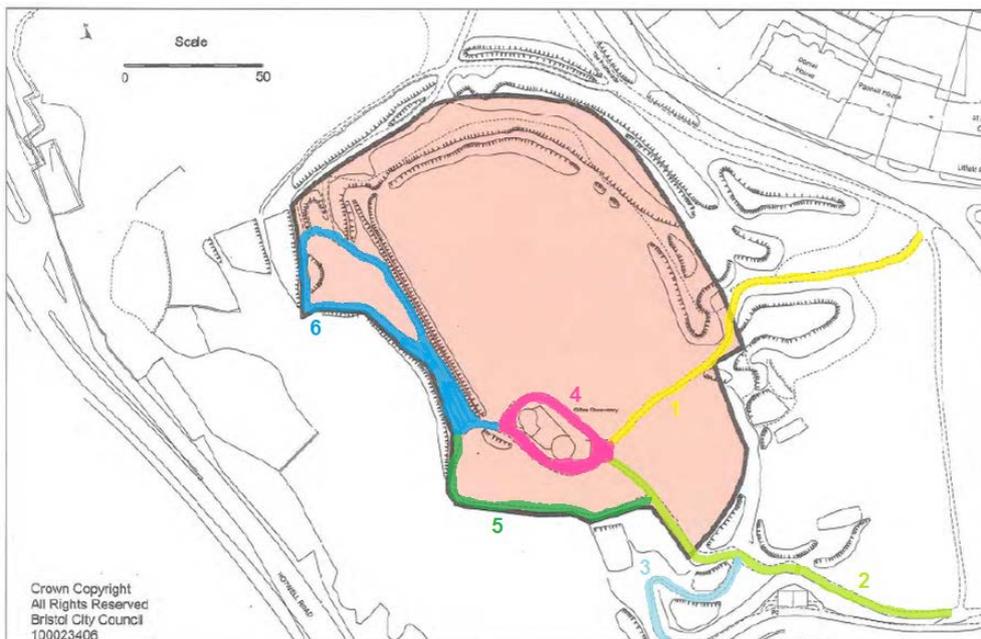


Fig.18 Extent of Scheduled Ancient Monument SAM 29 (BCC)

Lighting on Path proposal – Clifton Observatory

Location of existing lighting



The above is Path 1 in yellow on the below diagram. We propose to use the like for like lamps and matching the spacing of the above lighting.

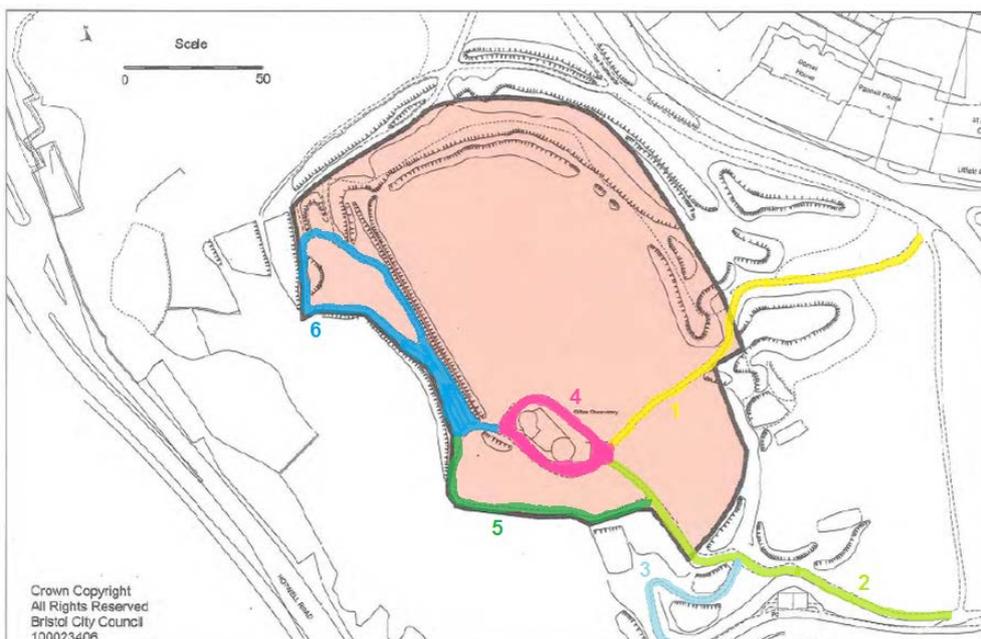
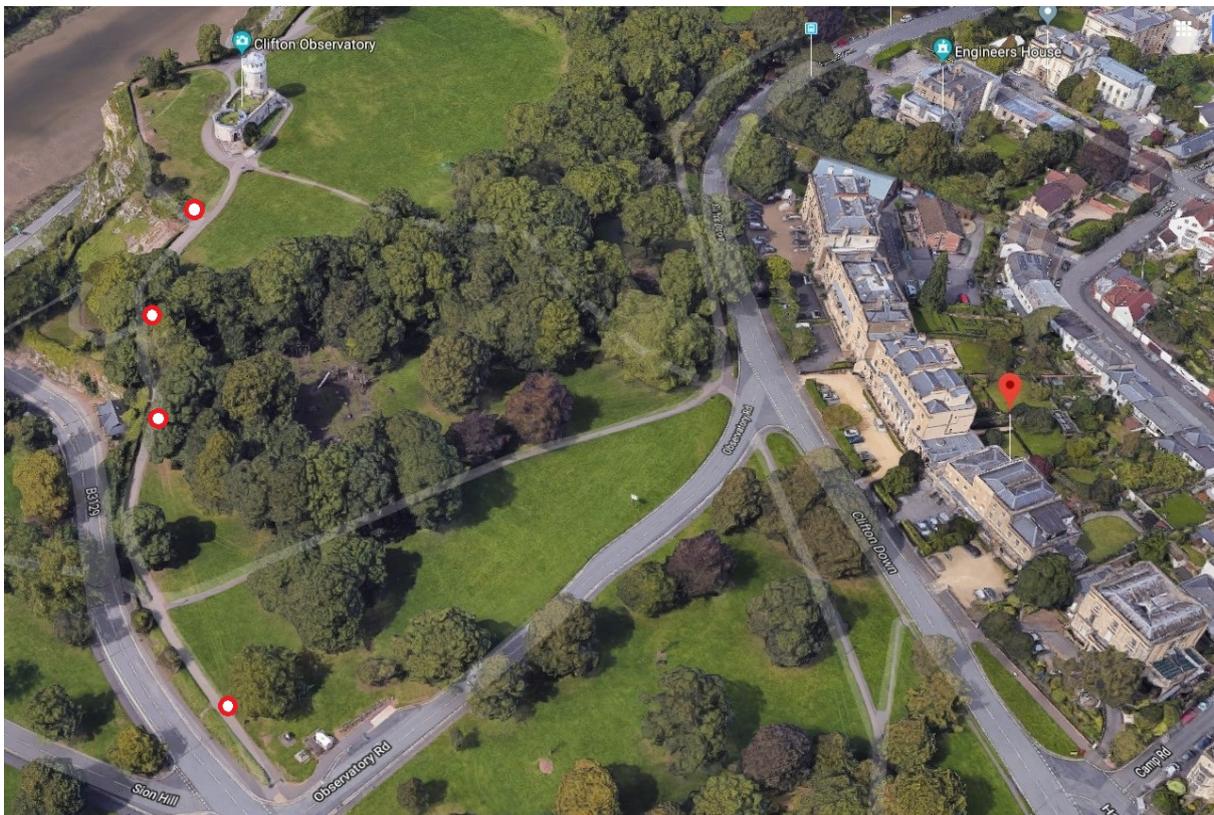


Fig.18 Extent of Scheduled Ancient Monument SAM 29 (BCC)

Lighting on Path proposal – Clifton Observatory

Location of existing lighting



The above proposed lighting locations are shown in Green and Blue as Path 5 & 6 on the below diagram. We propose to use the like for like lamps and matching the spacing of the lighting already in place in this area.

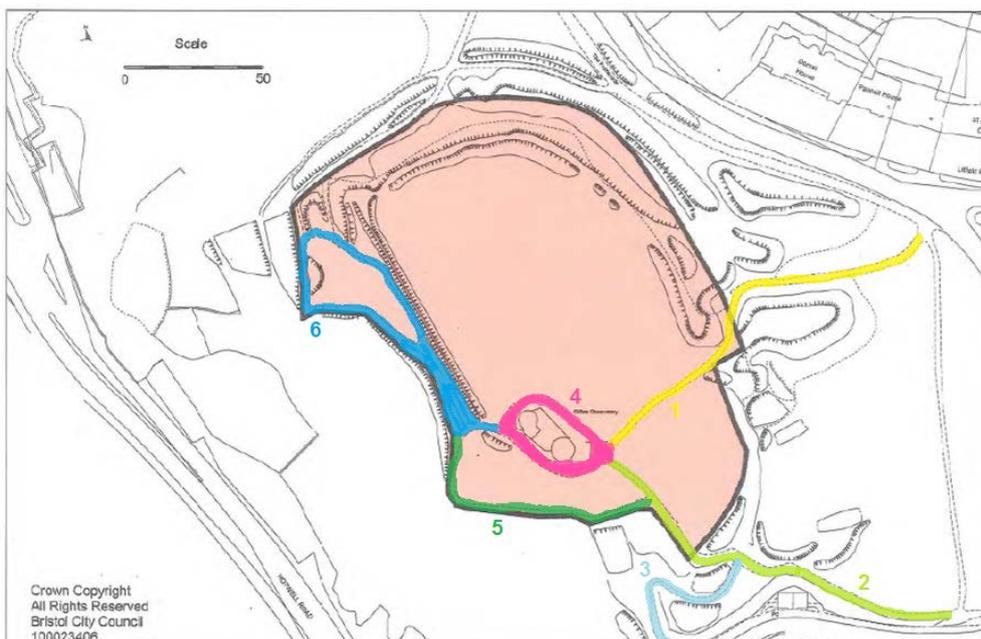


Fig.18 Extent of Scheduled Ancient Monument SAM 29 (BCC)

Lighting on Path proposal – Clifton Observatory

Detailed works to be carried out for installation

TBC

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

Downs Committee

28th January 2019

Title: Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project Annual Report 2018

Ward: Citywide

Officers Presenting Report: Becky Belfin Parks Development Officer, Parks Development Team
Mandy Leivers, Avon Gorge and Downs Biodiversity Education Manager

Contact Telephone Number: (0117) 3525656

Summary

To report, for information, on the activities of the Avon Gorge & Downs Wildlife Project during 2018.

The significant issues in the reports are:

A summary of the Project's main achievements with regards to conservation management and the education programme.

1. Policy

Not applicable

2. Consultation

Internal:

Ben Skuse, Area Supervisor Downs, Blaise, Kingsweston estates

External:

3. Context

The Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project was launched on 23rd October 1999. It is a partnership of Bristol City Council, the Downs Committee, Merchant Venturers, Bristol Zoo Gardens, Natural England, the University of Bristol, and Bristol Zoological Society. We also work with the National Trust, Forestry Commission and other landowners on the North Somerset side of the Gorge, as well as the Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge.

The aim of the project is 'to secure the future of the outstanding wildlife interest of the Avon Gorge and Clifton and Durdham Downs and to raise awareness and understanding of this unique location and its importance to people and wildlife'.

Annual review

This report provides a review of progress and key achievements of the Avon Gorge & Downs Wildlife Project between January and December 2018.

Habitat management works throughout the Gorge and Downs

The winter conservation works on the Bristol side of the Gorge continue to focus on the removal of scrub and invasive species, in order to protect the rocky limestone outcrops, and restore them back to species-rich grassland.

In the Gully, the goats are still effectively controlling the regrowth of scrubby species. The regular monitoring of the goats by the Council's Downs' Team and the Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge (FOD+AG) is continuing to ensure that they are well looked after. On the Downs, implementation of the Scrub Management Plan has continued for its fourth year, and is contributing to the gradual restoration of areas of species-rich grassland. The wildflower meadow areas continue to be managed on a hay cut which is important to maintain their value.



The education programme

Overall, **11,102** people took part in one of our events, activities or educational visits this year.

Events programme

The events programme continued to be popular with **690 people** taking part in our walks, talks, courses, children's and family events. We ran fewer events for the general public this year to enable us to deliver more community projects.

- **162 people** attended **nine walks**, including the 'Ups and Downs in the Avon Gorge' walk run in partnership with FOD+AG as part of the Bristol Walk Fest, and a new walk to look at summer-flowering rare plants in the Avon Gorge,
- **289 people** came to **four talks**, including the 'Wild Bristol' and 'Looking after Leigh Woods' talks;
- Our **six courses** were attended by a total of **83 people**; these included a new 'Introduction to sketching plants' workshop and the 'Identifying trees in winter' course;
- **156 children and adults** attended a total of **seven children's and family events**, including the 'Autumnal antics' children's half-term event (pictured right).



"It was absolutely wonderful. Well explained. Brilliant guides. I feel so lucky to have taken part."
'Ups and Downs in the Avon Gorge' walk

"I thought the format worked really well and we had the right mix of indoor preparation and practice in the field. We were supremely lucky with the marvellous fly-past and spiralling of the peregrines. Wonderful moments!" 'Birdsong' course feedback

"Thanks for the lecture last night - they are always good and so informative. It is amazing the wildlife we have around us to appreciate."
'Wild Bristol' talk feedback

The Audience Development Plan

In November 2017, we began working on our Audience Development Plan (ADP) and completed it in early 2018. The ADP process involved assessing our current audience, identifying the gaps, meeting with potential partners, and developing and planning new and exciting projects that will widen the audience visiting the Downs. In 2018, we have worked with refugee families, children facing family challenges and enabled children from schools and playschemes in socially deprived areas of the city to come to the Avon Gorge and Downs.

Formal Education Sessions

Primary schools

In 2018 we taught **1,749 school pupils** in **69 education sessions**. As part of our ADP project we contacted schools from areas of deprivation that had never been to the Downs for education sessions before. We were able to cover the transport costs for these groups with a grant from the John James Foundation (the cost of transport is a huge barrier to many groups, especially those from the less well-off areas of the city). We welcomed five new schools as part of the scheme which saw 303 pupils visiting us for education sessions.

Children and teachers really appreciated the scheme.

One child said: *"This is the best trip I've ever been on!"* Following their visit one of the teachers wrote:



"I'm so impressed by the thought and preparation you've put into your sessions - your resources are great. It's been wonderful to see children who don't normally engage in learning in the classroom totally come alive and fully engage outdoors." Year 3 teacher, St Nicholas of Tolentine Primary School

We gave an education session feedback form to the leader of each school group that visited us. Scores for session content, presentation, length and level were all between 9.2 and 9.5 out of 10 and 100% of groups said they were 'very likely' to book sessions with us in the future.

Higher education

We also taught **231 higher education students** in **12 sessions**. These included a lecture and guided walks for first year students from the University of the West of England's foundation degree in Integrated Wildlife Conservation and a lecture for students on the Bristol Zoo Gardens conservation evening course. A large group of students from the University of Bristol School of Biological Sciences Department also spent a day on the Downs learning different biological surveying techniques. Following their sessions with us, several students joined our team of volunteers.



Holiday playschemes and uniformed groups

241 children from playschemes and uniformed groups visited us for a total of **14 sessions**. As part of our ADP project we contacted summer holiday play schemes from areas of deprivation and two groups took up our offer of free transport. This enabled 41 children to enjoy an educational visit (only five of them had ever visited the Avon Gorge and Downs before). Following the session one of the group leaders wrote:



"Brilliant! Couldn't have asked for more. We had a fabulous time. The team are amazing and we really appreciate what they do!" Space Cadets playscheme leader

The feedback we received was very positive with leaders giving average scores of 9.5 out of 10 for session content, presentation, length and level. 12 groups said they were 'very likely' to book sessions with us in the future.

Audience Development Plan Community Activities

Wild Adventures Family Project

For this ADP project, we partnered with Bridges for Communities (an organisation working with refugees), the Bristol City Council Inner City and East Bristol Health Improvement Team (ICEBHIT) and FOD+AG. We worked with **five refugee families**, providing a programme that aimed to welcome them to Bristol, offered opportunities to learn about British wildlife, introduced them to the Avon Gorge and Downs and deepen their relationships to nature. We also wanted to provide space for them to connect with other refugees and members of the local community and to spend time together as a family. We hoped that the project would promote wellbeing and that it would help participants to feel more at home.



Sessions included walks to the Clifton Suspension Bridge and Observatory, bird and tree identification trails, peregrine watching and learning about our rare plants and goats. At the end of each session we had a picnic with the families and gave the children activity packs to take home containing wildlife related activities to enable them to continue learning between sessions. As most of the participants were not yet fluent in English, Bridges for Communities provided translators throughout the project and we developed resources in Arabic.

We held focus groups with the adults at the beginning and end of the project to measure its impact. They said that they had enjoyed the project and that being out in nature made them feel 'relaxed and happy'. The beauty of nature also supported participants' sense of wellbeing and optimism. By the end of the project, participants were able to recall the names of various birds and trees they had seen as well as details about the historical changes to the landscape. However many said that the most important benefits of the project were getting to meet other people and spending time together as a family. Strong friendships were formed between adults and children and participants said that meeting local people helped them to feel a part of the community.

"I loved watching the birds on the tree. I learnt that life is not only war. Life is very beautiful."

"Nature helps you to feel refreshed and far away from the house and the pressure and job, to feel refreshed – the smell of the trees, it's better than the smell of cigarettes. Today was cold but we enjoyed it."

"(Now) I don't feel a stranger, I don't feel isolated, I feel I am a part of this community and society."

"For me one of the best things was the opportunity to get out as a family and to be able to relax and breathe from time to time, this was lovely."

With the children we made a 'guide book' for others new to Bristol describing what they had learnt and illustrating their favourite memories.

"The peregrine falcon is the fastest bird in the world."

The goats eat the trees so the rare plants have more room to grow."

My favourite bit was having my family all together."

"My favourite bit is when I was looking for the birds and when I was working with my friend."

Overall, this was a very successful pilot project with significant impacts on wildlife knowledge, connection to nature and social integration, and it would be fantastic to run this again in the future.

The Downs Challenge

The 'Downs Challenge' programme was an ADP project developed in partnership with Imayla (an organisation that works with children facing difficulties). During a series of five sessions **18 children** completed different 'challenges' to discover the wildlife of the gorge and Downs and develop a sense of attachment to place.

The challenges were: To visit our herd of goats to find how they are saving rare plants in the 'Rave about rare plants' session; to meet the Bristol whitebeam and learn to identify trees in the 'Have tree-mendous fun' session; to learn about peregrine falcons in the 'Fly like a falcon' session; to get up close to minibeasts in the 'Explore spiders and minibeasts' session; and to 'Brave the dark' to learn about bats and moths. After each session we gave the children activity packs to enable ongoing learning, discovery and creativity between sessions.

The project ended with a celebration event where we were able to find out what the young people had learnt, what they had enjoyed and what they were most proud of. We were amazed at how much they had retained from the sessions with children able to recall facts including:

"Peacock butterflies rub they're (sic) wings together to make a hissing sound to scare off predators."

"There is a type of tree called the Bristol whitebeam. Interestingly they only grow in the Avon gorge and nowhere else in the entire world."

"Peregrine falcons are unlike any other bird in Bristol. They are known to be the fastest bird in the whole world. Shockingly they can go up to 200 miles an hour."



Some had overcome a fear of spiders, and others were proud of scaling the steep slopes in the Gully where the goats live.

We created a display in the café of St Paul's Learning Centre, which was up for several weeks so that visitors could find out about the project and learn a bit about the Avon Gorge and Downs.

Roots to Wellbeing Project

This ADP project was developed in partnership with the Bristol City Council ICEBHIT and FOD+AG and aimed to provide a series of seasonal guided walks on the Downs for elderly members of the community from St Paul's and Easton. In early May we met the group at their centre and gave a short talk about the project and the Avon Gorge and Downs to **12 people**. Later in the month we held our first walk on the Downs. Unfortunately, due to funding cuts to the ICEBHIT team they were no longer able to cover the transport costs for group and support the participants. Sadly we had to cancel the project as a result.

Community events

During 2018, we engaged with **8,068 people** through outreach talks, walks for community and special interest groups and community events. Highlights include the following activities:

Clifton Suspension Bridge 'Garden to Gorge' event

This public event was held at the Suspension Bridge Visitor Centre in May. We joined other wildlife projects from across Bristol, taking along our display and leaflets. The event was attended by **136 people**, 41 of whom stopped to find out about the wildlife of the gorge and Downs.

Bristol Festival of Nature

This was a hugely successful event with **7,267 people** visiting the Bristol Zoological Society 'Saving wildlife together' tent over the weekend. We took along our display and leaflets and ran activities for children to discover and learn about the fantastic wildlife of the Avon Gorge and Downs. **584 youngsters** decorated wildlife masks and **211 children** had the opportunity to role play at being young ornithologists, weighing, measuring and ringing life size toy peregrine chicks.



Lord Mayor's 'At Home' event

In July, the Lord Mayor invited us to run some activities for her 'At Home' event at the Lord Mayor's Mansion. We created a bird trail in the garden and held a wildlife mask making activity to introduce her **29 guests** to the wildlife of the Avon Gorge and Downs.



Downs Festival

We attended the Downs Festival at the beginning of September. We took along our display and range of leaflets and talked to festival-goers about the wildlife of the Avon Gorge and Downs and the work of the project.

Cycle Sunday

Organised by Sustrans, the roads on the Downs were closed to cars enabling cyclists to enjoy the site safely and at their own pace. This was especially popular with families who were able to let their young children ride their bikes and scooters around the site. We took along our display and leaflets, and **128 children** joined us to make wildlife masks.



University of Bristol Welcome Fair on the Downs

At the start of the new term, the University of Bristol Students' Union invited us to bring a stall to their 'Welcome Fair' on the Downs. We had neighbouring stalls with FOD+AG in the 'Keep it local' tent. Three of our volunteers (current Bristol University students) helped us to engage with **216 students**, three of whom have already signed up as new volunteers.



Volunteer support

Many of our events and activities couldn't take place without the support of volunteers and work experience students. We're thankful to the **59 people** who gave **878 hours** of their time over the year.

Funding

We are grateful to the following organisations for funding the education programme during 2018: Bristol Zoological Society; Commoners of Durdham Down and Durdham Downs Charity, Downs Committee, Ernest Cook Trust, John James Bristol Foundation, Merchant Venturers, Natural England, OVO Foundation, Smiling Eyes International.



The use of land off Ladies Mile 2018 Annual Report to the Downs Committee Bristol Zoological Gardens

11 January 2019

1. Use of the land

Since Bristol Zoological Gardens successfully retained planning permission for use of Ladies Mile, for a further three years, back in spring 2017, it has been well utilised on school holidays, public holidays and key weekends. The use of Ladies Mile, as an overflow car park for the Zoo, ceases over the winter until spring 2019.

From the table below, it is clear that the car park was utilised well within the allotted number of days. The site has remained in good condition and well managed by the Zoo.

1.1 High level usage statistics

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|--------------------------|--------|-------|-------|------|
| Days used | 41/45 | 27/40 | 26/35 | -/30 |
| Total cars parked | 10,067 | 6,532 | 4,008 | - |

- Used 1 day fewer than 2017 (2017 allocation is 40 and 2018 is 35)
- 2,524 fewer cars parked than 2017

1.2 Usage commentary for 2018

- 18 May 2018 there was a 'Mud Run' event set up within the Ladies Mile car park area which meant that had we wished to open the car park on that day, we would not have been able to.
- For ten days, between 20 June and 30 June 2018, the travelling community were set up adjacent to the car park, and the Zoo decided not to open the car park for this period. Historically travellers on the downs have been problematic for parking in this area, with thefts of ropes, children running around cars and travellers trying to park on Ladies Mile and causing issues. The Zoo continues to do its best to avoid interference and mitigate any issues.

The reduction in usage is in line with our ongoing aim to reduce visitor travel by car which again, year on year, is excellent news. However, it is clear that the car will remain a popular method of transport for families with picnics and young children, particularly in light of the advancements in hybrid and electric vehicle technology.

- Traffic congestion and emissions caused by driving around the surrounding area (looking for somewhere to park) is mitigated by the ability to park efficiently on Ladies Mile.
- BZG is sensitive to causing damage to the land and avoids use of the land when the ground is wet, even if the weather is fine on the day. There were 31 days recorded through the summer of 2018 where we specifically did not use the car park.
- Note – others may drive across the land in wet weather, which is out of our control; e.g. Bristol City Council contractor's vehicles working in the area, other members of the public etc.

A rapid contour survey was carried out, in line with the planning conditions, to help monitor the condition of the site. Detailed survey information is available upon request. A further survey will be carried out after the end of the use in 2019.



Drone photograph of the Ladies Mile car park area - 2018

2. Sustainable travel, Travel Plan and Incentives in place

The Zoo continues to run a whole host of measures to support sustainable travel for staff and guests.

2.1 Physical measures

- Covered guest cycle parking racks provided in the North Car Park
- Secure cycle parking for staff in the West Car Park, Education Centre and Gardeners' Yard
- Changing facilities, shower facilities and lockers for staff
- 6no. Electric car charging points in the North and West Car Parks
- Real time information screens in the gift shop to inform guests of live bus time information.

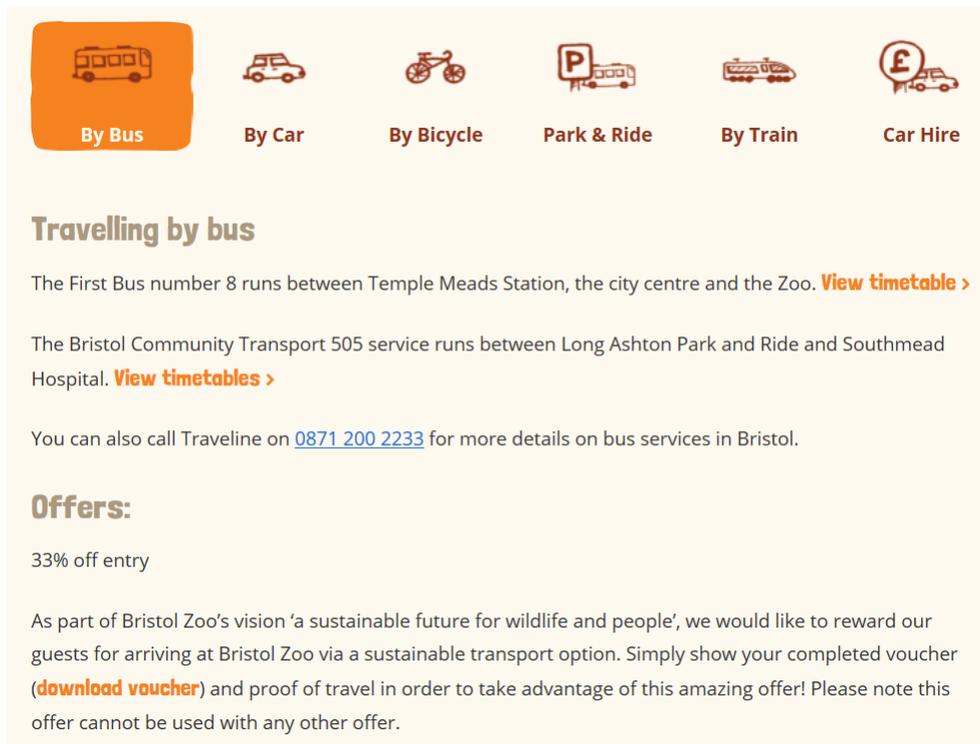


Real time traffic information installed in the gift shop

2.2 Marketing measures and incentives for guests

Bristol Zoo Gardens offer what is believed to be the most generous sustainable travel discount available, in Bristol and the Southwest, to guests attending visitor attractions by sustainable modes of transport:

- a. **33% off** entry with proof of cycling to BZG (a cycle helmet, say)
- b. **33% off** entry with bus ticket. Available on First Bus and Wessex Bristol
- c. **33% off** entry when visitors travel by train
- d. **33% off** entry with Park & Ride (P&R)
- e. **33% off** entry with National Express ticket
- f. **33% off** entry with tourist bus 'hop-on, hop-off' ticket
- g. 'Members cycling stamp card' providing £5 off annual membership renewal in return for traveling by bike 5 times to the Zoo
- h. Discounts are promoted through the website and members e-newsletters. On the home page there is a large 'Travel by bus, bike or train for an exclusive discount' link to encourage guests to come by alternative modes of transport. The 'How to find us' button on the home page states that discounts are available for travellers by bicycle, bus and train. A single click takes you to the 'Getting to Bristol Zoo' page where the travel options and discounts are specifically promoted with, where appropriate, links to third party websites for ticket sales. The link to download the form to fill out to claim your discount is prevalent throughout.
- i. Social media is continually used to promote these alternative transport offers.



The screenshot shows a navigation bar with icons for different transport modes: By Bus, By Car, By Bicycle, Park & Ride, By Train, and Car Hire. Below this, there is a section titled 'Travelling by bus' with text about bus services and a link to view timetables. Another section titled 'Offers:' lists a 33% off entry discount for sustainable transport, with a link to download a voucher.

By Bus **By Car** **By Bicycle** **Park & Ride** **By Train** **Car Hire**

Travelling by bus

The First Bus number 8 runs between Temple Meads Station, the city centre and the Zoo. [View timetable >](#)

The Bristol Community Transport 505 service runs between Long Ashton Park and Ride and Southmead Hospital. [View timetables >](#)

You can also call Traveline on [0871 200 2233](tel:08712002233) for more details on bus services in Bristol.

Offers:

33% off entry

As part of Bristol Zoo's vision 'a sustainable future for wildlife and people', we would like to reward our guests for arriving at Bristol Zoo via a sustainable transport option. Simply show your completed voucher ([download voucher](#)) and proof of travel in order to take advantage of this amazing offer! Please note this offer cannot be used with any other offer.

Screenshot of the BZG website: Sustainable discount for traveling by bus, bike, park and ride and train



As part of Bristol Zoo's vision 'a sustainable future for wildlife and people', we would like to reward our guests for choosing to arrive at Bristol Zoo via a sustainable transport option*. Simply show your completed voucher and proof of travel as detailed below in order to get this amazing offer!

Postcode:

Sustainable discount voucher available to download ahead of the guest's visit

2.3 Staff measures

- a. Support for cycle purchase
- b. Provision of lockers, showers and changing facilities
- c. 10% reduction in bus season tickets available
- d. Interest free loan scheme for annual season ticket purchase
- e. Emergency cycle repair kit and high visibility vests available
- f. Bristol City Council Travel Roadshow
- g. Walk and Cycle breakfasts
- h. Staff parking in car parks is limited through a seasonal and annual pass system
- i. Telephone and video conferencing facilities available to avoid unnecessary travel
- j. Staff email system used to promote initiatives to all staff
- k. Staff intranet with travel information available
- l. Weekly staff Wild Times newsletter regularly features sustainable travel incentives for staff
- m. Dedicated BZG 'Green Team' made up of a selection of staff to promote sustainable initiatives which includes travel.

3. 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.

3.1 Guests

Trends from 2010 show that around 75% of our guests travel over 10 miles to visit in peak season. This restricts opportunities for using public transport, with consistently around 80% of visitors (excluding school parties) coming by car. However, car occupancy is consistently high (3.61 people per vehicle in 2018, the highest for a decade). Our average guest car occupancy would be envied by most Bristol businesses and the wider city and means that the 'car', in this instance, is actually considered a 'sustainable mode of transport'.

In 2018 we have seen continued interest in uptake of the sustainable travel incentives since they were implemented in 2017, and believe this is certainly helped by our generous **33% off** entry when travelling by other means.

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% |

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

However, the 2018 figures show that visitors travelling by alternative transport has dropped off. Perhaps guests tried the alternative transport once and felt the discount did not compensate the increase in inconvenience or the increased struggle of the journey.

It is difficult to know what else the Zoo can do to encourage families with young children, buggies and picnics, where safety and convenience is such a high priority for them on a day out.

Travel by train was down in 2018, however there was significant regional disruption on the rail network throughout the year and this could have reduced confidence in any out of town visitors.

Key reasons given by guests for non-car travel being impractical were:

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

Many guests were unaware of the Park & Ride service however would be willing to use such a service in principle, with the exception of those with young children. However, the P&R which serves the Zoo is not well situated for visitors from outside the city, nor locals.

3.2 Staff

Staff car use had also reduced over the period from 51%, driving alone, in 2012 and 42% in 2017, down further to just 30% in 2018.

Comments in this year's survey about improvements to work travel covered issues mainly outside our control such as:

- Improvements to cycle routes
- Reliability of public transport on existing routes
- Availability of suitable public transport
- Traffic and roadworks

3.3 The future

The Zoo's ability to influence visitor and staff travel is limited by the quality and variety of public transport available, and the level of trust which is put in it. As local public transport infrastructure improves, the Zoo must continue encouraging guest to travel by more sustainable forms, however if uptake does increase the current 33% discount must be reviewed as it will become less affordable for the Zoo. The Zoo's sustainable financial position is critical to the survival of the Zoo in Clifton, which provides over 200 jobs and is an excellent visitor attraction for locals and tourists.

The Metrobus does not go near the Zoo therefore unfortunately does not help, and the new train station at Portway may help train travel if there is better signage in place at Clifton Down railway station, however is still a while away from completion. The Zoo is currently exploring, with other local Clifton organisations, the options of car sharing and a community bus service which could develop in 2019.



Guests enjoying a picnic with their families at the Zoo

4. 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.

4.1 The 2018 Ecological Survey

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

- The composition of the vegetation in both areas has been broadly stable since 2006, although changes associated with the drought of 2018 are apparent in both the car park and control areas.
- The car parking area, when compared to the control area, has a similar diversity of plants of unimproved grassland but a slightly elevated diversity of 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.

4.2 General condition

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 (parking cars in various different directions). The number of these species recorded has since been stable.

The Zoo maintain close contact with the City Council, in particular the Downs Rangers, on the management of the land, carrying out maintenance work using agreed seed mixes and to an agreed method and carrying out any repairs to the land where necessary.



Indicative car park layout; the car park has 4 rotating entrances, off of Ladies Mile, to mitigate wear

Conclusion

Although fewer total users, and used on fewer days in 2018, Ladies Mile has been invaluable to the Zoo throughout 2018 for those spikes in visitor numbers on specific key dates. The site has been well managed by the Zoo's in-house Grounds Team and the condition of the site is in good health.

The Zoo appreciates the agreement which has been in place for many years now. An agreement which provides a much needed source of income for Bristol's parks and at the same time helps the Zoo ensure its guests can still visit and enjoy the Zoo at the busiest times of the season.

2019 will see further reduction in use, down to a maximum of 30 days.

Tom Hedges MRICS
Director of Estates
Bristol Zoological Society

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