

Bristol City Council

**Downs Committee
25th Sept 2017**

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

Title: Downs Management and Events report

Ward: N/A

Officers Presenting Report: Melissa Inman, Senior Events Officer
Ben Skuse, Parks Supervisor

Contact Telephone Number: 0117 9037141

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Recommendation: that Downs Committee approve a spend from the Downs budget of £5500 for Fertiliser for the football pitches, to be applied in accordance with advice from Natural England.
- That the Downs Committee agrees to extend the Circus contract for a further year and for a new contract to become operative from 2019 for a period of 3 years subject to CPG approval.
- That the Downs Committee agrees to Lets Rock taking place on the Downs in 2018 subject to licensing and Site Permissions approval.

1. Policy

Not applicable

2. Consultation

a) Internal

John Williams, Area Manager North.
Becky Belfin, Parks Development Officer
Sarah Blazier, Operations Coordinator North
Ben Skuse, Downs Supervisor
Gemma Dando, Service Manager
Melissa Inman, Arts and Events Manager

3. Events Report; provided by Melissa Inman.

3a) Filming

3b) Event & Festival Updates

Music Concert Downs

The music concert has been considered a big success with no adverse feedback received from key stakeholders. Approximately 21,000 tickets were sold and de-brief with the organisers is due to take place in October with the Events Team and Members of the Bristol's Safety Advisory Group.

Circus Tender

It was agreed that the Downs Committee be recommended to agree to extend the Circus contract for a further year and for a new contract to become operative from 2019 for a period of 3 years. If agreed at full committee the Events Team will arrange for the extension to be agreed and will also begin work on the new tender process.

Proposed events programme for 2018

The 2018 events programme was reviewed at the Event Subgroup committee on the 11th September. It was noted that these could be quite disruptive in terms of car parking and road closures. It was therefore felt that perhaps a cap could be placed on the number allowed each year and agreed that the Events Sub Group committee should receive a report with a suggested cap on the number of Charitable Events allowed each year on the Downs for review at the next meeting.

Let's Rock concert proposal for 2018 was discussed and it was decided by the Event Sub Group that the recommendation is made to the Downs Committee to agree to Lets Rock taking place on the Downs in 2018 subject to licensing and Site Permissions approval.

3c) Future 2017 Events

Funderworld - Ticketed funfair

Set up dates: 7-15 March 2017

Operating dates: 16th March - 8th April 2017

Breakdown dates: 9 -13th April 2017

Projected events site fee income to the Downs Committee for 16/17:
£108,321.88 (not including the concert levy at £1 per ticket sold)

Site Fees are based on the schedule of charges 16/17.

4a) Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project Education Programme; provided by Mandy Leivers.

During July and August we engaged with 722 people through the education programme. We ran two guided walks, two children's holiday events and took part in the 'Cycle Sunday on the Downs' event.

In July, 302 school children visited us for education sessions including a pupil from Hedgeway school (which caters for children with severe autism). We have taken bookings for 16 sessions for September and October.

A rainbow and a brownie pack enjoyed evening sessions on the Downs, and over the school holidays 152 children, from across the city, visited for play scheme sessions. In August, 10 children and mums from the Easton Family Centre visited for a 'Discover the Downs' session. The event was run in conjunction with Bristol City Council's Inner city and East Bristol Health Improvement Team. Unfortunately our second family event with the Somali Forum was cancelled.

We teamed up with FODAG to lead two 'Your Downs' guided walks. The first was for eight people from Headway (a charity working with people recovering from brain injury) and the second was for eight people from the Five Ways to Wellbeing group who are co-ordinated by the Inner City and East Bristol Health Improvement Team.

We have also been planning and preparing for the Peaceful Portway event on the 17th September. We are organising a 'Gorge-ous Avon Gorge' family trail. Along the trail participants will meet various knowledgeable people who will talk about a particular aspect of the gorge's wildlife, geology or history. We are running this event in conjunction with: the FODAG, Clifton Suspension Bridge, University of Bristol, and the National Trust.

4b) Management and Resources

Downs Team Report; provided by Ben Skuse.

This report covers a period from July to September when we get peak visitor numbers in the year. Due to this, clearing the ground free of rubbish and keeping up with overflowing bins becomes our primary focus, followed by continuing grass mowing when the ground is clear. Daily duties continue, goat checking etc.

During August the team have marked the 28 pitches necessary for our Football activities back onto the ground for the 17/18 season ahead. Also during August the annual hay cut of our meadow areas took place and went well.

I am sad to report that at the back end of July we lost one of our 6 Goats.

This was due to an unsupervised dog getting into the enclosure and chasing one of our herd towards and off the cliff that is behind the water pumping station on the Portway. Both the goat and the dog died in the fall. As a result of this incident we have posted up more signs around the enclosure insisting on dogs being kept on leads when inside. We have also taken measures to make our fence line harder for dogs to penetrate. The owner of the dog was very apologetic and expressed a wish to contribute financially to getting another animal should we wish to go down that route. One crumb of comfort to come out of this sad incident is the news from the vet at Bristol Zoo. In the post mortem report they stated that other than the injuries sustained in the fall they found the Goat to be in good health. So hopefully if this is representative of the health of the others then they are doing well.

Lastly as no doubt members will be aware, the Downs music event took place on Saturday Sept 2nd. The Downs team worked alongside Team Love in the weeks leading up the event itself to ensure a smooth handover of the site. The event itself enjoyed good weather this time around and seemed to go well. The grounds are now back in use for football season.

As we move back to Autumn now the team will be moving back to working on the Downs scrub management plan, identifying and removing areas of scrub on the Downs to halt the loss of limestone grassland habitat that the Downs is important for.

Ben and Sarah attended a site visit with members of the Avon Gorge Working Group to identify actions and a further group meeting is due to take place in September to discuss these.

- Recommendation: that Downs Committee approve a spend from the Downs budget of £5500 for Fertiliser for the football pitches, to be applied in accordance with advice from Natural England.

Access:

- The Bridge Trust compound was removed on 30th August which was ahead of schedule. The site has been re-turfed.

Sustainable Drainage Scheme:

- Trial pit dug on 18th Aug. Outcome TBC. Reinstatement to be carried out.

4c) Management Plan

The first initial draft has been produced. This was circulated to the sub group and a sub group meeting took place on 3rd May 2017, during this meeting comments and amendments were raised by the group and the plan is now being updated to reflect these.

The plan will next be circulated to all Downs Committee members and then to

the key stakeholders for consultation. Following the consultation period the sub group will meet to review any comments, final alterations will be made as appropriate before the plan is brought back to the Downs Committee for approval and implementation.

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

4d) Movement and Place Framework subgroup

A sub group is due to take place. Date TBC.

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 Blazier, Mark Sperduty, Ed Plowden, Oliver Coltman, Mandy Leivers, Becky Belfin.

4e) Tree safety works

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

4f) Health and Safety:

- The rock catch fence replacement was completed at Sea Walls, Black Rock Quarry in April / May 2017.
- The annual rock face inspection for the zig zag path, childrens playground and slopes above Bridge Valley Road were completed in March 2017. Next year the Bridge Road rock face will be included in the report.
- Black Rock Quarry / Sea Walls had a qualitative rock face risk assessment in February 2017.

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.

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