



Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge

April 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 remains committed to its core values to represent legitimate users of the Downs and to support the City Council and the Downs committee in the good governance of the Downs and Avon Gorge.

Since the last meeting FODAG volunteers have had a busy time carrying out a range of tasks in support of the Downs operational team including, completion of the dead hedge programme at Circular Road, a spring clean of the Haven shelter and essential annual maintenance to keep the Victorian steps in good order.

Weekly goat monitoring, deep weekend litter patrols and additional litter projects with University students have been completed. We continue with a conservation project monitoring the regeneration of Downs wildflower grasses at the Botanic Gardens. Members have also been responsible for the removal of regrowth at the Iron Age Fort site. In the next few weeks we are planning to carry out a refurbishment of the Cabman's shelter at the White tree Roundabout.

FOD+AG continues with regular walking events and 21 members attended a fascinating visit to the New Hotwell led by Paul Wood. A full programme of walks, talks and events are planned for the summer.

FOD+AG are close to completing an arrangement with AXA Health Insurance to permit us to display the results of a planned Downs Photographic Festival. We are negotiating the use of a large roadside window at their prominent location at the top of Redland Hill. The intention is to provide an electronic rolling display of submitted images 24/7 for a period of three weeks.

To ensure we stay up to date we have commissioned a new three-fold pamphlet for distribution to the wider public. The purpose is to inform and

educate and to assist with a planned membership recruitment. A smaller bi-fold pamphlet will also be produced.

Tim Clarke has recently agreed to join our committee and brings a wealth of experience gained as a volunteer with Avon Wildlife Trust.

During these potentially uncertain times and to reaffirm we remain relevant as an organisation FOD+AG is in the process of carrying out an in-depth analysis of all of our activities. We are using a modern business tool to ensure we remain focused and concentrate our efforts to provide the greatest good in support of the Downs. Once completed the document will provide FOD+AG with a blueprint for the future.

Our late colleague Richard Bland was a regular contributor to several north Bristol publications. Richards informative articles about the flora and fauna of the Downs were extremely popular and well received. As a tribute to Richard we intend to keep up the tradition and aspire to meet Richards high literary standards.

FOD+AG are pleased to be associated with the new Granny Downs Tree Trail scheduled to be officially launched later this month and thanks the Lord Mayor for agreeing to officially open the tree trail.

We are pleased that the work to permit the Whiteladies Road cast iron urinal to be secured has been completed and thanks the Downs committee for its commitment to ensure that toilet provision for the Downs is sustained.