

**Stoke Bishop, Westbury-on-Trym  
Neighbourhood Partnership  
Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

**Title:** Notes of Environment Working Group (28<sup>th</sup> July 2016)

**Report of:** Andrew McGrath

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**Recommendations:**

1. The Neighbourhood Committee is **requested to agree to fund £4,745** to undertake clearance work on the Stoke Lodge sensory garden area, as per 2.1 below. The funding is to be released from the NP's S106 Hiatt Baker funds.
2. The Neighbourhood Committee is **requested to agree to fund £3,150** to undertake the design work detailed in appendix 1. As per 2.5 below. The funding is to be released from the NP's CIL funds.
3. The Neighbourhood Committee is **requested to agree to fund £7,646.59** to undertake the work detailed in the request in 5.1 below. The funding is to be released from the NP's S106 fund relating to 99 Devonshire Road.

**Present:** Sheila Preece, Alan Preece, Gill Brown, Val Bishop, Ella Davies, Barbara Grieger, Lucy Wallis-Smith, David Mayer, Helen Furber, Stephanie French, Roger Gamlin, Kevin Chidgey, Mary Knight, Gary Brentnall, Andrew McGrath

**Apologies:** Claire Campion-Smith, Alan Aburrow, Hilary Long, Clare Milne, Eileen Poad, Susan Mayer

Meeting Chaired by Alan Preece –

**1. Minutes and Matters arising from 28<sup>th</sup> April 2016 meeting:**

**Notes considered accurate with the following exceptions or continuing actions:**

**1.1 Phoenix Lane Weeds.** This is being picked up by BCC Parks Maintenance. The paths are due another spraying soon. The gravel is breaking up here, so weeds are likely to continue to proliferate.

**1.2 Tree Sculpture.** All large logs have been removed.

**1.3 Japanese Knotweed Flier.** Distributed by Alan and Gary.

**1.4 Tree Sculpture update** Official opening of the tree sculpture took place on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> July. Articles going in local publications. Photos of the event have been distributed

**1.5 Trymside.** Wessex Water left some scarring when they performed work here last year. This should be reinstated. Alan stated that he'd inspected the site and it didn't appear to be as bad as previously. It was agreed that a watching brief will be kept. **Update:** Alan reported that he has found a growth of Thorn Apple in this area, which is highly poisonous. Gary saw some men in protective garb in that very area prior to the meeting, so it may be that they are removing it. **Action:** Gary to seek confirmation that it has been removed.

**1.6** The idea of having a Parks Champion was discussed again. Not resolved. Carry forward to next meeting.

## **2. Sensory Gardens.**

**2.1 Stoke Lodge Sensory Garden.** This area has already benefitted from being cleared by Community Payback. Further to the email that Gary distributed, the breakdown of the work to be undertaken is as follows:

- Tree works as discussed: An initial clearance of approx 50% of the canopy cover including leaning poplar. Retain apple trees and good specimen trees (mature oak) and some attractive hazel coppice. General remedial works to retained trees such as removing dead wood, severing ivy, lifting crowns, etc.
- Outside boundary fence overgrown laurel: Cut to approx. 1metre to re-establish as a maintainable hedge and to allow light into the garden space. Clear out dead trees, rubbish, etc.
- Ground clearance within garden boundary. Remove rubbish, piles of brash etc. Using small excavator, lightly scrape the existing ground cover to expose site for setting out.
- Woodchip to be left on site, any suitable logs cut into seating rings or 'construction' logs.
- Non-recyclable materials removed via skip.

The total cost for the above would be **£4,745 + VAT**. This includes all labour, plant and machinery, welfare facilities, skip hire. The work should take five days.

2.2 Gary doesn't believe there are any Trees with TPOs on them on this site

2.3 The members of the Environment Working Group voted unanimously to support this project.

2.4 The Neighbourhood Committee is **requested to agree to fund £4,745** to undertake the work detailed above. The funding is to be released from the NP's S106 Hiatt Baker funds.

2.5 **Old Quarry Park Sensory Garden.** This is a 'virgin' site and therefore much easier to undertake work on. A quote to undertake the detailed design work has been obtained from a contractor who is on the BCC preferred contractor list. Please see **Appendix 1** for the detailed breakdown of proposed design costs. There will be two design options. Local residents would be involved in the project via the consultation process. Gary will lead on this consultation.

2.6 The Neighbourhood Committee is **requested to agree to fund £3,150** to undertake the work detailed in appendix 1. The funding is to be released from the NP's CIL funds.

3.0 **Sea Mills Rec.** Ella and Lucy described their ideas regarding this nice, but rather neglected park. It is mostly used for football. There is little of interest in it beyond the open green space. Sea Mills Together have undertaken a survey. Lots of simple improvements would make a big difference. Ideas include a path around the rec, so that people in wheelchairs, scooters and babies in buggies can use it more easily. There is no longer a play area on the site. Trees on site need to be safeguarded. One idea is to have a community orchard, probably a soft fruit orchard. As a cautionary note it was pointed out that the path could consume a large proportion of any funds allocated (it needs to be a permeable structure).

3.1. A draft park improvement plan is needed. It would be good to include the local primary school in the project. The meeting gave its support to the group developing a plan. Ella would seek to set up an interested group.

4.0 **Trymside.** This is now all in this NP's area. It would benefit from simple improvements. Footpath improvements, wild flowers etc would make a big difference. Don Alexander (now councillor for Avonmouth and Lawrence Weston) has been heavily involved in this site. The meeting showed its support for a plan being developed for this area. Gary suggested this would be helped by a "walkabout" to explore what is needed.

## 5.0 S106/CIL budget allocations.

5.1 Mary Knight and Kevin Chidgey of the Church in Westbury Park, discussed their plans for improving their kitchen premises. The full cost will be approximately £19k. They provided detailed quotes from two contractors.

5.2 The request to the NP was for the full S106 funds generated by the development at 99 Devonshire Road. The amount available is **£7,646.59** (please note this total has increased by £23.56 from the last quarter due to annual interest being added). The site had been a chapel and was made available for a dwellings development. The S106 generated from the site is to be used for - *'The provision, improvement and/or maintenance of community facilities within one mile of 99 Devonshire Road, or within Henleaze Ward'*

5.3 The request from the Church clearly fits these criteria. The applicants were commended for the quality of their request. On being put to the vote, the meeting voted unanimously to support this request.

5.4 The Neighbourhood Committee is **requested to agree to fund £7,646.59** to undertake the work detailed in the request. The funding is to be released from the NP's S106 fund relating to 99 Devonshire Road.

6.0 **Community Payback.** The request for Community Payback to clear the area around the new tree sculpture has already been arranged for 2nd week in August.

Stephanie warned that clearing the area may uncover some dangerous holes

6.1 There is currently a discussion with Community Education to include the grass area behind the house in the cutting regime. Gary to report progress.  
**Action:** Gary

6.2 There is also some work on Trymside scheduled. There is some detritus on Sea Mills Lane that is yet to be cleared.

7.0 **Trees.** Stephanie expressed her frustration regarding the tree lists all NPs have been asked to submit to BCC. The guidance states that each NP will receive a report six weeks after it has submitted a list. Stephanie has been waiting for at least 13 weeks and has not yet heard anything. Andrew and Gary asked to see if they can make any progress on this. **Action:** Andrew and Gary

7.1 The new tree list process needs to be publicised. Stephanie requested that the old process that is currently on the NP's website be removed. Stephanie will write up a short description of the process and have it posted on the website. **Action:** Stephanie

7.2 The Tree Sub group is waiting to hear from Bristol University regarding the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of its tree offer to NPs that have trees as a priority in their NP Plans. The NP is keen to utilise this offer but hasn't heard anything yet. NP Coordinators are supposed to receive notification from the University. **Action:** Andrew to see if any colleagues have heard from the university. Update: The University has not been in contact with any NPs on this matter

7.3 If we get a breakthrough with the university the meeting confirmed the suggestion that a specimen tree be planted on the paved area opposite Waitrose. The guidance seems to suggest that the full cost of this (including new tree pit?) will be paid for by the university.

7.4 Stephanie and others will be attending the tree champion training on 9<sup>th</sup> August.

## 8. Any Other Business

8.1 Alan reported that the new sign at the Roman site on the Portway is now up. Alan was commended for his work on this project.

8.2 Sheila reported that Glyphosate has been passed for continued use by the E.U for the next 18 months until the European Chemical Agency has produced its report. In the interim individual EU member states are allowed to decide whether or not to allow its use .

8.3 Sheila reported that along with the other diseases that trees are susceptible to, Cedars have now been reported as being susceptible to a disease. All of these diseases are likely to have come in to the country in wood products from abroad.

8.4 Sheila noticed that there was some strimming going on in Ebenezer Lane last week. This appears not to be an extra cut but is an earlier cut than agreed due to the sheer abundance of growth along the lane. The hope is that there will be, as per agreement, no cutting in May next year, which is likely to kill the plants before they've seeded. An email to Duncan Venison was circulated to the EWG, and a response is awaited.

8.5 There are examples of overhanging growth on properties around Druids Hill and Queens Gate. Also on Stoke Lane. **Action:** Gary to investigate

Date of next meeting: **2pm Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2016**

## Tree Report. for 26<sup>th</sup> September 2016

### Stoke Bishop Westbury & Henleaze Neighbourhood Partnership

1. At last I have some progress to report regarding our **Tree Wish List for 2016/2017**. BCC has had huge difficulties with resources i.e. Officer time, but on 18<sup>th</sup> August I was asked to confirm funding availability for our trees for planting between December 2016 and March 2017. We already had funding in place - up to £6000 - agreed in June 2016 so I anticipate that surveying of the chosen sites will start shortly and we should get more news which I hope will be that our sites can be planted up.  
Two of the sites - the central reservation in the dual carriageway outside Old Quarry Park (3) and the replacement street trees in Church Road Sneyd Park (5) should be straightforward enough as these are replacement trees and the sites are in fact on the Tree Sponsorship website.  
I anticipate a few more problems with the tree planting proposed along Westbury Road (map attached). These are new sites and require surveying, which could highlight some problems. Also, depending upon the presence of nearby services, some tree pits might be required, which will add to the cost. If this happens we could reduce the number of trees we plant, or increase our spend, or both. I'll advise you when I know more.
2. You may recall that in order to keep the allocation of trees spread across the NP "fair" , maybe not per year, but overall with a kind of rolling programme, and to assist me with making decisions between meetings of the Environment Group and the NP, we set up a **Tree Sub Group**. This comprises me as Tree Champion, David Mayer ex officio as NP Chair, Val Bishop from old Henleaze and Hilary Long from old Westbury.  
Stoke Bishop has acquired part of Sea Mills since the boundary changes and although I have so far managed to represent Stoke Bishop trees as well as oversee the whole NP's tree related matters I asked an environmentally interested resident from Sea Mills to join our group, and I am delighted that Lucy Wallis, a resident of Sea Mills (mostly) has joined in to help. We have met and agreed the 2016/2017 Tree sites which had already been sent to BCC (see above). We have also changed the information on the NP website to update residents concerning the way the new Tree Request process works - to a limited extent. The process is complicated and subject to revisions i.e. too much information and not always correct - so we decided just to ask residents to contact their Elected Representatives or their Councillors, or Gary or Andrew to be put in touch with me or members of the Group and we shall contact them. I hope that the Councillors and Elected representatives got my e mail about that a few weeks ago via Andrew.
3. The **Tree Wish List for 2017/2018** is already in the planning stages. Some progress has been made. The sub group thought that it might be sensible to mop up the tree sites already on BCCs Tree Sponsorship pages as this is a quick and obvious way to obtain new trees in the area. These sites fill in the gaps, which is what we want, they are replacement trees and hence are cheaper, and the sites have already been surveyed. It looked too perfect to believe and indeed when Sheila Preece and I spent a few hours looking at West Broadway with a view to putting the sites already surveyed by BCC in that road on to our list for 2017/2018 we discovered that the current BCC tree mapping of West Broadway - both with regard to existing trees and to available tree sponsorship sites to replace missing trees - is wrong. We have informed the Tree Officer of our results and it is one of the matters that the Sub Group shall be dealing with as we plan for 2017/2018. There just have not been the resources for BCC to keep its tree mapping up to date. Guerrilla gardening and even tree planting by residents on Council land has not

helped. Also we found several tree sites “acquired” by Bristol Water for water meters.

4. BCC Trees suggested **Tree Training Days for Tree Champions** a few years back and these are now happening. The current programme is for 2 days. I went on one on August 9<sup>th</sup> and shall go on another on September 20<sup>th</sup> (I am writing this report some time in advance of this meeting). These days are a useful opportunity to learn about urban trees and to meet the team at BCC and learn about their ever changing procedures.
5. The **sculpture of the Cedar of Lebanon on Stoke Lodge Parkland** is now finished. I wrote an illustrated article outlining the whole story which was published in BS9. We held an “Opening Ceremony” on July 23<sup>rd</sup> with Andy O’Neill the sculptor in attendance. The event was publicised by e mail and word of mouth and many members of the Environment Group attended with many Stoke Bishop residents as well. Folk continue to be pleased with the result and glad that it was done. If anyone wants any of the photographs, some very kindly taken by the professional photographer and local resident Martin Bennett during the carving and on the day of the “opening”, and some taken by the very amateur me clambering bravely into the scaffolding (gulp), please ask me and I can supply CDs for you with several photos. The professional photos are large files and too big to e mail in any number. Mine are medium sized and a few can be emailed, but they do not tell the whole story.
6. Supplying folk with contact details does work! A new **volunteer to help us with street tree surveys has emerged** and soon, as we build the lists for the coming years, we shall be using her in Westbury once she has been shown what is involved. As I said above, the mapping needs checking before we go down the route of ordering replacement trees. Using the internet and clicking a few buttons cannot replace leg work.
7. **At the request of BCC we held off last year with regard to new tree planting.** We did achieve a replacement planting for a dead tree on Druid Hill near its junction with Shirehampton Road. We did get a tree planted in Stoke Lodge Parkland - but that had been delayed from the year before. Residents in Kewstoke Road achieved re-planting of felled trees in their street through the Well Being grant system operating (well done them), but that was pretty much all we achieved. We’ll definitely get 8 and could get 13 trees this next season, and who knows how many in the future if we adopt the suggestion of mopping up Tree Sponsorship sites. The number is just limited by the amount of its money the NP is willing to spend! Something for discussion? If any of you wants to know how to find all the tree sponsorship sites available in our patch just ask me. You’ll need to use a layer within the Pinpoint mapping.
8. I have reported to you about the **University of Bristol’s investment in trees** in Bristol. Their **second phase** was to put large trees into significant places even if it meant creating expensive new pits. We were told that we would not be excluded from this phase and I was told that our Neighbourhood Officer in BCC would be contacted and given details of the arrangements, but that we were to choose a site. The sub group suggested putting a tree or trees somewhere into the concrete area round the junctions of North View/Howard Road/Linden Road/White Tree Road, and the Environment Group agreed that site. Meanwhile our Officers assure me that they have heard nothing from the UoB and they have checked with colleagues working with the NPs associated with the first phase. I last wrote on 30<sup>th</sup> July and will write again before departing on holiday if necessary.

I really do not know what is happening/has happened, and I fear that we have been left out for a reason I know not. It will not be for want of trying to be included.

9. Hilary Long has been continuing to follow up with developers what their plans might be with regard to **the Southmead Police Station site** following the rejection by the Development Committee of their plans to build a Care Home in such a way as to require the felling of one of three **Wellingtonia**. Having initially asked to meet Hilary and I they cancelled that meeting and have since remained silent, which is a shame. We are sure that the home could be built and we could keep the tree. We have no idea what it might be that is causing the delay. The site is no longer in our patch, but having caught the ball we'll continue to run with it.
10. Channel 4 TV recently got permission from Coombe Dingle Sports Hub to use **Stoke Lodge Parkland as an HGV park and car park**. I'll not debate the rights and wrongs of that here as there are others dealing with the various issues, including our Councillors, but all I can say is that when I went to the Parkland at the request of our Neighbourhood Officer and spoke to Channel 4's chap in charge they did almost straightaway moved nearly all the cars away from the root protection area of the **TPO'd Turkey Oak** on the Ebenezer Lane perimeter, and they did not use that area again for parking during the remaining four days they used the land. I am disappointed that Coombe Dingle staff (again avoiding whether or not they could give permission) did not point out to Channel 4 operatives in the first place the sensitivity of some of the areas of the land and ask them to avoid parking under trees, protected or not. The roots of another protected tree - a **Corsican Pine by the Gas Cabin** - became exposed in the gravel roadway and our Neighbourhood Officer, Gary Brentnall, negotiated with Coombe Dingle staff to get the roots covered again quickly. Again this exposed a lack of forethought and care I think, showing that Coombe Dingle staff lack sufficient knowledge of the environment there by permitting such occurrences in the first place. It seems that it is up to residents to protect the trees on the Parkland - a task willingly undertaken.

Stephanie French  
NP3 Tree Champion

## **Public Sector Equality Duty**

Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires the Neighbourhood Partnership to consider the need to promote equality for persons with the following "relevant protected characteristics": **age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation**. The Neighbourhood Partnership must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between different groups who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

*The duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination in the area of employment, also covers marriage and civil partnership*