

Downs Management Report – 12 June 2023

We have reached mid-summer on the Downs.

The best time of year for verdant greenery and bright colourfulness !. A thick covering of grass now goes a long way to covering over the scars of winter. We have bright green leaves on the trees and flowers of all types bringing colour to our meadows and verges.

Hopefully members have had a chance to get up to site and see some of these beautiful scenes. The second half of the summer has the tendency to be less pristine looking !. Higher temperatures/heatwaves, parched grass, fires/BBQs and the gradual effect of increased footfall/litter, but the team will keep up the efforts to keep the site looking as good as possible. We are assisted in this more and more by members of the public, friends groups and corporate groups which is all very welcome and very needed.

So we are deep into continual, cyclical grass mowing and clearing bins and litter daily. This work pattern is entirely normal for the time of year in the industry of managing busy parks. I have held pre event site meetings with the organisers of

Race for Life Sunday 25th June

Pride Saturday 8th July

Forwards Friday 1st Saturday 2nd September

This is in order to make preparations and get the sites ready to welcome all 3 events.

The Funderworld site (Water Tower) was left in its usual poor state after this year's Funderworld. I want to state though that I do not place much blame with the organisers for this. It is an inevitable outcome of bringing a funfair, with all of its heavy vehicles, onto ground that is already sub-par in March. The site is, whilst far from ideal, not as bad as I have seen it in the past. We can recover it and there is nothing on that site now until Funderworld return next year. So a welcome period of recovery which we will put to good use. The organisers cleared up conscientiously. We talked about the ground on the site hand back and they agreed to contribute towards soil costs.

Members will have noticed that works to improve the drainage situation at the Clifton playground have taken place. Hopefully this will see an improvement in the usual muddy conditions that the playground suffers from across winter.

As ever my thanks to FODAG volunteers and the community payback team for the valuable contributions that they make with various tasks throughout this period.

Ben Skuse

Bristol City Council Parks

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