

**Stoke Bishop, Westbury-on-Trym
Neighbourhood Partnership**

Title: Notes of Environment Working Group and Tree Sub group

Report of: Environment Working Group and Tree Sub Group

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Recommendations:

1. The **Neighbourhood Committee is requested to agree to fund £7,646.59** to undertake the work detailed in the request in 1 (5.2) below. The funding is to be released from the NP's S106 fund relating to 99 Devonshire Road.
2. The Neighbourhood Committee is requested to agree to a change of funding source for the Old Quarry Sensory Garden Project. The work agreed at the previous NP meeting is not eligible for CIL funding. Please see afternote in 2.2 below for details. The **Neighbourhood Committee is requested to agree** that the funding for this project now comes from the NP's general budget.
3. The **Neighbourhood Committee is requested to agree** to the release of the remaining Hiatt Baker S106 funds (£13,844.69) towards the completion of the Stoke Lodge Sensory Garden Project

Present: Alan Preece (Chair), Helen Furber, Jenny Hodges, Stephanie French, Mildred Miller, Sheila Preece, Eileen Poad, Roger Gamlin, Ella Davies, Claire Milne, Val Bishop, Gill Brown, David Mayer

Apologies: Andrew McGrath, Sue Mayer, Alan Aburrow, Claire Campion-Smith, Hilary Long, Lucy Wallis-Smith, Graham Donald

Prior to the main agenda Alan informed the meeting of the deaths of Gerry Arnold and Sylvia Kelly

Meeting Chaired by Alan Preece –

1. Matters arising from notes of 28th July 2016 meeting:

1.5 Trymside. Gary confirmed that the thorn apple plants had been removed.

1.6 Parks Champion. Gill who had previously expressed an interest said that she would prefer to leave it in abeyance for the time being.

2.1 and 2.5 Stoke Lodge and Old Quarry Park Sensory Gardens. See *Item 2 in main Agenda.*

4.0 Trymside. "Walkabout" with Gary took place on 30th August. Ella said that Don Alexander is interested in promoting otters which have been seen in an area quite close. There now seem to be enough people interested in improvements. Volunteers needed - gather names and ask them to present at the NP Forum. (Perhaps communicate this to Don Alexander?)

5.2 99 Devonshire Road. The NP Committee was not able to approve the EWG request for £7649.59 for undertaking work on the development at 99 Devonshire Road from the S106 fund relating to that address because the meeting was not quorate when one person declared an interest. This has been carried forward to the next meeting. The NP indicated its support for this project at the September meeting.

6.0 Community Payback. Untidy remnants of wood etc have been removed from around the tree sculpture in Stoke Lodge. Stephanie will try to identify where the deep holes are that need filling as they are dangerous. It was commented that some bushes that have grown up on the site need vigorous pruning beforehand. David suggested that Jenny Wilkes might perhaps be able to get a contractor's quote for clearing.

8.4 Ebenezer Lane. Response received from Duncan Venison on 17th August concerning the extra unauthorised strimming 2 weeks after the July cut. He was "frankly dismayed" and was going to suggest to the contractors that the Sept. cut would no longer be necessary. On 19th Oct. Alan wrote to inform him that yet another cut had been done. DV has now forwarded this information to the Highways Maintenance Manager and will forward to us any "substantive response". Mary Wright and DV will review instructions each right of way for March 2017 when retendering for new contracts is due.

8.5 Overhanging growth over pavements. Jenny was very happy with what had been done to trim back hanging brambles and shrubs on Druids Hill. Various other roads were mentioned where certain householders allow their hedges and shrubs to grow massively out over the pavements. A suggestion was made that a leaflet could be produced to be put through letter box of premises where the situation was particularly bad. NB. Stoke Road in the notes should read 'Stoke Hill.'

2. Sensory Gardens in Stoke Lodge and Quarry Park

2.1 Stoke Lodge: The NP Committee approved the EWG request for £4745 from Hiatt Baker S106 funds for Stoke Lodge clearance work.

Gary confirmed that the preliminary ground works have been completed. The space is now useable. Mature trees pruned, fences repaired, the huge overgrown laurel hedge cut down to 1m. He complimented the gardening team on an excellent job. Gary said that Alex Frasier wants to involve himself in the garden. His son who is an adolescence psychiatrist would be happy to give his services. Jenny Wilks will be involved in decisions on how the garden will be maintained.

2.2 Old Quarry Park: The NP Committee has approved the EWG request for £3150 for design work from CIL funds.

Gary has fed back to Alex Frasier the general ideas of what the garden should look like. The design is still very basic and AF will now draw up more details on materials and different usages. Eileen expressed an interest in having input when progress has been made in the designs. AF will try to keep both SL and QP gardens in parallel.

Afternote: It has become clear since the last NP meeting that the Old Quarry Sensory Garden design/sketch work is not eligible under CIL funding. At most, 10% of a single project can include design costs. Even this amount is only eligible if the design/sketches used are agreed and progress to full implementation. Therefore, the **Neighbourhood Committee is requested to agree** a change to the source of the funding for the design/sketches of this project to now come from the NP's general budget.

2.3 David expressed thanks to Gary for masterminding the progress on both gardens. He reminded the group that £20k of Hiatt Baker money was earmarked for the two gardens. We need to firm up and ring-fence the money a.s.a.p. On the basis of the fact that the quote for QP work was between £5k and £10k and could be financed by CIL funds, the **Neighbourhood Committee is requested to agree** that the remaining **£13,844.69** of Hiatt Baker S106 money is spent on up to £5k for SL design and the remainder for SL works.

A motion was carried to push things forward as soon as possible.

Afternote: The Neighbourhood Coordinator and Neighbourhood Officer will need to check with the relevant BCC officers that any agreed work is eligible under the CIL and S106 regulations.

3. Walkabout in Sea Mills

3.1 It was noted that the **tennis courts** at Dingle Close were in bad condition with weeds and one missing and one broken net. The surrounding fence was still fine. A query was made about transfer of courts to Community Assets. Alan reported that courts at Redcatch were quoted at the Parks Forum where Sport England would provide funds (and not the LTA) and would then leave organisation to locals. **Action:** Gary will consult the Tennis Officer for information about the status and process of community acquisition.

3.2 At the **Sea Mills Rec** it was noted that the condition of the path is not good .

4. Sea Mills Rec development ideas

4.1 Ella reported that Lucy wants to see a community orchard planted possibly from the 'one tree per child' programme. Lucy is investigating.

4.2 **Bins:** Gary said that there were currently 2 dog bins in the rec. which could be replaced by general rubbish bins with notices on them to inform people that they could be used for dog waste. The 2 dog bins there could be recycled elsewhere. **Action:** Gary to investigate possibility and costs.

4.3 Other development ideas could be discussed at a later date.

5. BCC Corporate Strategy 2017-2022

5.1 David reminded the Group briefly that BCC has to do a balanced budget and therefore has to find £34 million in savings in this year. A plan of potential savings has been

circulated and 4 public meetings have been scheduled to explain options. The Neighbourhood Partnerships is one item under discussion and also the idea of 'parish councils'. The Mayor will be holding four meetings to take public views. One relevant to BS9 is:

[Tuesday 15 November 2016 at Henbury School, Station Road, Bristol, BS10 7QH](#)

for which you will need to register. The above link will take you to the registration page.

5.2 Alan reported that Gemma Dando is advertising for Head of Parks and is restructuring teams so as to be more efficient and for all be present to discuss things together at meetings. She hopes to go out to view what other Councils are doing e.g. Sheffield

6. Trees

6.1 Stephanie's report enclosed as **appendix 1**. She showed photos of various sites. She reported frustration at not getting replies to emails nor action from BCC officers.

6.2 Her request for 25 replacement trees costing £7375 was approved unanimously.

6.3 Because of lack of action on BCC's part with regard to trees: **Action:** Gary to look at cost of replanting in this NP by outside contractors.

6.4 David wanted clarification concerning works required for replacement of dead trees/ planting funded ones.

6.5 Action: Alan to send letter to Richard Ennion, copied to Gemma Dando and Teresa Crichton (Area Environment Officer) expressing concern about lack of information on trees (paid-for ones, replacement for dead ones, trees already with finance earmarked etc) . Also, lack of action by Highways in surveying areas proposed for trees (e.g. in Westbury Road) to investigate possible underground services that would prevent a tree being planted.

6.6 Action: Clare will write to Alan with details of work on local nature reserves and 4 further creations already designated. Old Sneed Nature was going to be adopted but nothing has happened.

7. Other identified issues and AOB

7.1 **Tesco's** proposed car wash was turned down again.

7.2 **Red telephone boxes** Consultation ends on 7th Dec.

Sea Mills Square : the locals would like to keep the box for an exhibition of local history. Sea Mills Together are investigating.

Bell Barn Road: proposed defibrillator - doubts expressed about cost (insurance, type of defibrillator) and possible vandalism. The idea was referred to the NP Forum for consideration.

7.3 **Sevenside Community Rail Partnership** GWR are keen on improving stations (this may be discussed at the NP Transport Group also). Sea Mills station needs upkeep. Looking for community involvement. Will be discussed at Stoke Bishop Forum. Possibilities

of people from the nearby allotments being interested in helping e.g. planting flowers, weeding etc

Heather Cullimore (from SCRP) has been invited to the Forum.

7.4 David reported that the footpath between Cote Lane and Elmlea School is in poor repair. **Action:** Gary to convey the situation to the PROW team and report back.

7.5 Sue Mayer has asked for meetings not to be in half-terms.

7.5 There was a proposal to move the meetings of the EWG to a library (to save booking fee). Westbury Library would be the more central for NP3.

7.6 Gill said that work was to start soon on the gate near the rose garden in Canford Park to install a chicane. Also the LTA were no longer interested in installing lights in Canford Park.

7.7 A resident in Sea Mills had asked whether anything could be done concerning the poor condition of the white bridge over the Trym.

7.8. It was asked whether Payback could be used to trim back overhanging hedges for elderly people who cannot manage it themselves. Various organisations also do such things. **Action:** Gary is inviting a representative of one of these organisations to talk about this at one of the Forums.

8. Date of next meeting: 2pm Thursday 12th January 2017

NP Tree Report December 5th 2016

Carrying out Tree activity for and in the Partnership is a bit like waiting for a bus – nothing happens for weeks and then everything happens at once. I may have to give you an update verbally because this report has to be submitted before I might know the answers to some of the outstanding problems we are currently facing.

All summer long I have been trying to find out what is happening with regard to our Tree Wish List submitted to order on May 3rd. Some of the trees should be going in to the ground now. I'll be working with the Tree sub group and Andrew and Gary to try to get them in before March 2017. The BCC Tree Team has almost disappeared and such as remain are still very much pre-occupied with One Tree Per Child project. Neighbourhood Partnership replacement and new Street Tree planting seems to struggle to get a look in. In October we started getting some replies to enquiries and more may come just before this NP meeting. I went to the Tree Forum on November 14th and managed to speak to two (maybe the last!) Tree Officers. They were apologetic - and want yet another description of "Where we are" with our List and Planting for this year - although I have already sent in so many my typing fingers are sore - and they have promised to "deal with it". Richard Ennion seemed ashamed of the delays but the Council is in such a mess I feel truly sorry for him. Meanwhile I report upon other tree happenings which show what we can achieve by communication and exhortation.

- A resident of West Broadway Henleaze has sponsored a replacement of a tree outside her house.
- A resident of The Crescent Henleaze has sponsored a replacement tree outside his house.
- A Neighbourhood Watch in Westbury is working towards sponsoring several trees in Grange Park.
- One Tree Per Child has promised to plant some fruit trees on Sea Mills Recreation Ground - "The Rec". Thanks to Lucy Wallis (who has joined our Tree sub Group) for organising all of that.
- A Westbury resident has come forward to help with surveying of streets when required - largely because BCC mapping is inaccurate (BCC knows this and is very happy to receive corrections). Thank you Barbara Sammonds.

I like to think that this because in NP3 we do trees!

2016/2017 Planting – November 16 to March 17

It is likely that we can get the 3 trees on the central reservation of the dual carriageway in Henleaze outside Old Quarry Park planted by end of March if only we can get the payment sorted out. We have residents' sponsorship for part of one of them and this seems to have become a complication – welcome though it is.

It is likely that we can get 5 the trees in Church Road Sneyd Park planted by end of March if only we can get the payment sorted out. The SPRA has sponsored part of one of them and this seems to have become a complication – welcome though it is.

Getting the trees planted in the verges on Westbury Road opposite Majestic Wine is proving to be a nightmare. These are “new” trees and may need tree pits. Highways BCC is supposed to advise but I cannot find out if they have even been asked to do that despite the fact that we sent our request in 7 months ago. We had budgeted for 5 trees if pits are not required – and obviously fewer (maybe only 1) if pits are required.

So we shall have to keep on asking (*see opening comments*).

2017/2018 Planting - November 17 to March 18.

The Tree sub Group – charged with finding planting sites and then supervising the request for tree planting across the NP - has met twice to plan for the 17/18 season. We took a policy decision – with the support of the Environment Group – just to ask for replacement trees in existing tree sites, not new trees in new sites. (The latter is proving to be nothing but a headache.)

We have come up with a list of tree sites, all of which are on the BCC Tree Sponsorship map and have been visited by us. These choices, endorsed by the Environment Group and announced at the three Forum meetings (as recommendations, nothing definite), are as follows:

Dingle Close – 12

Sea Mills Square – 2

West Broadway – 2

Stoke Lodge Parkland - 1

Grange Park – 1

Barley Croft – 5

Oakwood Road – 2

The Tree Sub Group – supported by the Environment Group – requests the NP to set aside **£7375** for 25 tree replacements in 2017/2018.

As the years pass – and if NPs continue to exist and if they have any devolved funds – we shall make sure that the allocation of trees is spread evenly across the NP area.

Further news:

1) The previously mentioned University of Bristol 2nd phase of tree planting seems to have stalled. I am still pursuing this and will report when I know more. The Environment Group has chosen the planting site in Westbury Park as previously reported to the NP. I managed to talk to a Tree Forum member on the 14th who knows all the UoB folk involved and he is chasing it all up for us. The money has not (yet) been given to others so we are not the only ones waiting for an outcome of the deliberations.

2) A successful Tree Appeal in Church Avenue Sneyd Park;

One of the roles of your Tree Champion is to try to prevent trees already growing from being felled. I made a presentation on this subject at the public Tree Forum. This is really one of the tasks of the BCC Tree Officer in the Planning Department, but a bit of support and the encouragement of further public and Councillor comment does not go amiss. A householder in Sneyd Park wanted to fell a significant tree to build an extension. Needless

to say I commented on that application and encouraged others to do so. The Tree Officer said “No” and enforced BCS9 which says that green infrastructure, where significant and if there is space, must be maintained. The householder appealed against that decision but the independent Planning Inspector supported the Tree Officer and local opinion and dismissed the appeal.

So the score was Chain Saws 0 - Scots Pine 1.

The important point from this case was that the Inspector did not invite further comment from residents, taking only the evidence and comment already submitted on the planning website for the original application. So if you comment on an application please do make all your points first time around, you may not get another opportunity.

3) A Wellingtonia in the grounds of Southmead Police Station remains under threat. Many locals objected to the felling of this tree, feeling that there was space for the Care Home and the tree (indeed all the 3 trees). We won the case before the Development Committee North, with both Hilary Long and I attending and pleading for the tree, citing Policy BCS9 again.

But the developers have put in an appeal against that decision. We have made further statements, and there will also be a hearing before the Planning Inspector - which I shall attend if possible. Southmead Police Station has moved in to Southmead Ward, so I have brought the two Councillors and their Environment Group up to speed on that. They would have had an opportunity to comment to the Inspector before the cut-off date.

4) There have been some improvements made by Wessex Water to Trymside following their use of it as a vehicle depot during their drains improvements in BS9 in 2014. There has been some weed killing and some re-seeding. With the Chair of the Environment Group I am monitoring that. We shall ask for further work if next Spring it appears necessary.

5) Bishops Knoll is in our patch and is an important local historical site in the management now of the Woodland Trust (www.woodlandtrust.org.uk). There are some hugely important and veteran trees in it. They are being labelled and a route planned for a Tree Walk - so when that is all up and running I'll do something about it for our website so everyone can know about it.

End of report

Stephanie French, Stoke Bishop Westbury & Henleaze 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