

Bristol Tree Forum meeting 22 January 2018 20:00 – 22:00

Chair Peter Harnett

Present:

Stephanie French, Alan Morris (Civic Society), John Tarlton, Chris Wallace, Mark Ashdown and (later) Cllr Clive Stephens

Minutes

Manchester visit on 6 February. Richard Ennion is visiting Manchester to see how they are handling the funding problem for trees and parks. Mark and Vassili are going with the group. Manchester has an initiative called City of Trees [<http://www.cityoftrees.org.uk/>] which aims to plant 3 million trees . It is an established charity with a wide range of partner organisations

ACTION Mark to report back on this meeting

Redland and Cotham Amenities Society (RCAS) [<https://rcas.org.uk/>] whose representative for Parks and Open Spaces is Alison Bromilow were reported to have funds in the order of £10k for replacement tree planting. As the committee apparently lack a officer for trees, they may be open to help with suggested sites in the area

ACTION. ? to get in touch with Alison

iTree survey. Richard Ennion is keen to undertake an i-Tree survey of Bristol . He has allocated £5k of BCC funds and has negotiated a contribution of another £5k from Forest of Avon Trust [<http://forestofavontrust.org/>] He has asked BTF for a contribution.

There was general discussion about this survey which included the following:

BTF do no have any funds of their own to contribute

Would this survey be within the bounds of Bristol city only, thus excluding significant parts of Greater Bristol which are in South Gloucestershire, BANES and North Somerset?

What aspects of the environment are included in the study? (there was discussion about biodiversity but the method seems to focus on economic benefits such as air quality improvement,CO2 capture and stormwater control)

What is expected to be learnt from the survey? What has been learnt from similar studies such as the London Survey which could be applied in Bristol?

What is expected to be done with the outcome ?

What role would BTF have in such a survey ?

Would a revision of the Tree Coverage survey taken in 2011, based on an analysis of aerial photographs, achieve a similar aim? Is the data form the 2011 survey available?

Info: The i-Tree method is described on www.itreetools.org : In the UK, i-Tree is being developed under the auspices of the Forestry Commission <https://www.forestry.gov.uk/fr/itree> with technical partners Treeconomics .The Torbay study is here <http://www.treeconomics.co.uk/uk-treeconomics-pilot> and the London study documents are available here <https://www.forestry.gov.uk/london-itree>

ACTION: Mark to compose a letter to Richard outlining these points and any others which occur to him to send to Richard Ennion to inform discussion on the Manchester trip

Council Roles. Clive informed us that responsibilities in the council had changed. Mhairi (pronounced 'Very') Trelfall was now the cabinet member responsible for Highways under the more general heading of Transport and Connectivity [<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/mgUserInfo.aspx?UID=155>] whilst Asher Craig [<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/mgUserInfo.aspx?UID=611>] remains responsible for Parks, under the more general heading of Communities.

Maintenance of Street trees. Clive was able to expand on the news that monies had been found to continue funding Street Trees. The responsibility for street trees lies with the Highways Department. Coordination of all tree work, which includes those trees which are the responsibility of other department (Parks, Education and Housing) lies with the Parks Department. Funding to the value of £100k has been found for street trees which is expected to be sufficient to cover 18 months work of pollarding, removal of epicormic growth and verge work . These monies come from an over-payment into the budget for parking fines so this funding source may not be available in future.

Tree Strategy . This topic was started at the last meeting following a request from Richard Ennion who has asked for BTFs recommendation for the funding of trees in Bristol. This topic lead on to discussion about a number of inter-related topics including:

what do we know about alternative funding possibilities. Trusts and Foundations have been mentioned in regard to the funding of parks but it was not clear what these actually meant, nor whether either would be appropriate for street trees. Mention was made of the London initiative for a National Park City as another approach. <http://www.nationalparkcity.london/>

what is the role of BTF? Historically it has been an interface to the community recognised by the council and whose advice carried some weight. In carrying out this function it has organised public meetings and tree champions to be aware of local concerns and opportunities albeit with an uneven coverage across Bristol. Members of BTF have also taken a strong interest in the fate of private trees in conservation areas and under TPOs. Clearly these interests overlap with other bodies such as the Civic Society, the community replacements for Neighbour Partnerships and the pending Council Neighbourhood Committees. Responsibility for trees in parks has been the concern of the Parks Forum. Is this still a viable distinction?

How can BTF exert influence? In the face of frequent re-organisations of the council, it is unclear who is responsible for what with regard to trees and what the ongoing status of directives such as the Bristol Tree Replacement Standard [in <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/planning-and-building-regulations/supplementary-planning-documents>] Knowing how the system works enables BTF to help member so f the community achieve community goals.

ACTION Peter Harnett to collect and circulate work begin last meeting.

ACTION Clive Stephens undertook to find out about the current reporting structure and responsibilities.

ACTION DEFERRED – Peter Harnett to arrange meeting with Mhairi but this meeting needs to be informed by work on our recommended strategy for trees and our re-statement of or role in the community.

Tree of the Year : Richard Bland (my email) raised the idea of a competition of the Bristol Tree of the Year. It was thought that this need further thought in preparation for a summer launch.

ACTION Chris to suggest how this could be expedited via the bristoltreess.space site

Planning Application – Stephanie alerted the group to a planning application

<http://planningonline.bristol.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=P1D8CSDNFJQ00>] which proposes, inter alia, to remove 68 trees.

ACTION: All to consider their views on this proposal.

NEXT Meeting : 19th March

Minutes by Chris Wallace