



Bristol Tree Forum Committee Meeting 6 July 2020

Minutes

Mark Ashdown (chair), Stephanie French, Councillor Anthony Negus, Colin Palmer, Vassili Papastavrou (sec), James Smith, John Tarlton (treasurer), Chris Wallace (web site and IT)

The meeting was held on Zoom.

1. Reports from Officers

John reported that a donation to Avon Needs Trees was made and dendrometers purchased. We have paid the cost of the Richard Bland plantings on the Downs, but the Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge and the AWT need to refund the BTF with their contributions. Vassili reported that a beech tree threatened with felling at the rear of Belmont Road had been issued with a TPO. The tree which is large and visible from a long way away was scheduled for removal as part of a subsidence claim. Chris reported on IT and the development of a Tree Care web site, which allows volunteers to log their work supporting trees. In addition, he has been developing a tool to model changes in canopy as a result of planting in coming years. John mentioned that with respect to flooding there is 38% less rainfall under a tree. Mark reported on the status of the Action Plan for Bristol's Urban Forest: no meetings have been held since coronavirus.

2. Failure of Bristol Metrobus trees: What should the BTF now do? Very many trees have failed on Hartcliffe Way and Link Road roads and probably elsewhere. Councillor Negus kindly agreed to ask questions to council meetings on our behalf to get the bottom of this. Mark and Jim agreed to progress this.

3. Update on second BTF banner. We are expecting photos from Sean in due course. It was suggested that we work with a school to get the design sorted, perhaps through a competition.

4. Tree Champions Coordinator (Jim)

We have a new Redland and Cotham Amenities Society tree person called Dave Jones. Stephanie and Jim are preparing an updated list which will be presented to the next tree forum meeting. Jim reported on the status of the tree champions. There are 33 people and Jim is going to circulate an up to date list (following input from Stephanie) and then establish regular contact with them.

5. Bristol Open Doors in 11,12,13 September (tree walks) Jim to do Northern Slopes Tree trail. Two tree walks are available on the Trees of Bristol app. Chris is considering a walk specific app. Also, there is now a Redland Green walk specific app. Jim will get an update from Open Doors.



6. Brislington (former Wyevale Garden Centre) illegal tree felling. We now need to find out the outcome and whether there were any penalties (Mark).

7. Planning policies. The issue is the relative priority of local planning policies (eg green infrastructure policies) versus simply getting houses built. The delivery of housing (especially affordable housing) seems at present to trump everything. It is likely that the BCC interpretation is contravention of the National Planning Policy Framework. Because we need to build homes BCC is ignoring all other planning policies. However, all the clauses are of equal validity.

7. "West of England" tree Strategy. Vassili reported that a West of England tree strategy (which means in effect for the area of the "counties that used to be Avon") is being prepared. The process does not involve the BTF and does not really focus on urban issues. The BTF provided comments on a draft.

9. Ongoing issues

- Wales and West Utilities responded in a very positive way to concerns over vans parking [under trees close to their site](#). However, we have been informed that they have now removed the notices that were put up and we do not understand the reasons for this.

Chris Wallace said that we are still looking for suitable sites for the dendrometer bands.