

Bristol Tree Forum AGM –minutes

7th November 2022

Twenty Five people attended the Bristol Tree Forum Annual General meeting in City Hall, including Councillors Brown, Hathway, Stone and Wilcox,

1. Introduction from Chair, Mark Ashdown

Mark welcomed participants to the meeting and introduced our two speakers (see their details below). We are grateful to Councillor Varney for arranging our room booking at City Hall.

2. Finding our remarkable UK & Irish urban trees – Paul Wood.

Paul Wood, who is the author of three books on urban trees gave an engaging and lively account of notable urban trees around the UK, including some examples from Bristol. Clearly, urban trees are an important part of cityscapes around the country and we hope that they will in the future be valued as such in Bristol. We are grateful to Paul for coming to talk to us.

3. Panel Discussion between Paul Wood and Andy Bryce

Following Paul's presentation we then had a discussion with Paul and Andy Bryce who is the BCC Trees and Woodlands Manager. Questions were wide ranging and it is clear from the thoughtful replies that Andy is well aware of the difficult arboricultural environment that we are in as a result of the climate emergency and other factors such as ash dieback, coupled with the budget pressures of the council as a whole. In addition, another officer, Richard Ennion also provided comprehensive answers to several questions. Andy is not responsible for decisions to remove significant trees as a result of the Planning Process and was not therefore able to answer questions on that topic. The BTF would like to thank Andy and Richard for attending.

4. Our Tree Champions

Jim Smith and Stephanie French outlined the importance of local Tree Champions in engaging with local planning applications, tree planting and other tree retention issues. Whilst most areas of Bristol are covered, there are several that are not.

5. Bristol's emerging local plan

The Emerging local plan will be extremely important for Bristol's trees. As yet, no opportunity has been provided to the BTF to assist with the current drafts and our proposals for the revision of the Bristol Tree Replacement Standard remain to be taken forward. We hope that the new local plan will include measures that result in the genuine protection of existing urban trees in the future.

6. Election of officers and financial report

Following unanimous votes the following officers we re-elected: Mark Ashdown (Chair), Jim Smith (Vice Chair and Tree Champion Coordinator) John Tarlton (Treasurer) Vassili Papastavrou (Secretary) Chris Wallace (Datasmith). The Committee also includes Stephanie French (also Tree Champion Coordinator) and Dougal Matthews.

Anyone interested in the work of the committee, particularly if a Tree Champion, is encouraged to participate in the meetings which are bi-monthly, as a first step to join the committee and taking on the role of one of the officers in the future.

The financial report will follow in the final version of these minutes.

Vassili Papastavrou 1 January 2023.

Paul Wood

Paul is the author of three books: London's Street Trees: A Field Guide to the Urban Forest; London is a Forest; London Tree Walks: Arboreal Ambles Around the Green Metropolis and is the editor of the Great Trees of London map. He has a lifelong passion for nature, especially trees, and was formerly a trustee of the London Wildlife Trust. He is currently working on a book about 1,000 remarkable urban trees throughout the UK and Ireland, to be published by Penguin in 2023.

Paul regularly leads walks and gives talks about trees in urban areas. As well as London, Paul has led walking tours around the streets of Bath, Sheffield, Dublin and even Philadelphia.

Andy Bryce

Andy is the Trees and Woodlands Manager at Bristol City Council. He manages Bristol's team of tree officers and is responsible for managing our existing tree stock. Andy joined BCC in November 2021 having previously worked as an arborist at The National Arboretum, Westonbirt, latterly as its Collections Manager. Andy has worked in arboriculture for over 20 years, six of which were as an arborist in Bristol. Andy's current research interest is tree pests and diseases.

Treasurer's report

<i>Transaction</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Credit</i>	<i>Debit</i>	<i>Balance</i>
	03/12/2021			£5753.02
<i>Donation</i>	15/01/2022	4.53		
<i>Website Costs (ToB)</i>	15/01/2022		138.37	
<i>Donation</i>	21/01/2022	47.1		
<i>Maelor Forest</i>	11/02/2022		520.8	
<i>Arb Soc Sub</i>	18/02/2022		68	
<i>Website costs (BTF)</i>	01/03/2022		84	
<i>Student Ecology Course</i>	13/04/2022		50	
<i>Website costs (BTF)</i>	10/06/2022		49.32	
<i>Donation</i>	20/06/2022	47.1		
<i>Moisture Monitors</i>	01/07/2022		534.12	
<i>Leaflets</i>	04/07/2022		142.8	
<i>Downs Ecology Report</i>	22/09/2022		75	
<i>Website costs (ToB)</i>	03/11/2022		114.39	
<i>Payment for Moisture Monitors</i>	04/11/2022	600		£4674.95