

## **Bristol Tree Forum: Meeting at Art Park Wells Rd. Bristol 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024. 7pm.**

### **Meeting Notes:**

Present: Mark Ashdown (Chair), Jim Smith (vice-Chair), Chris Wallace (Tree Champion Coordinator & Web-Master), Stephanie French, Anne Silber, Julian Noble.

Apologies: Vassili Papastavrou (Secretary), John Tarlton (Treasurer) Sean Harding, Dougal Matthews.

1. Date and Place of Next Meeting: Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024 - venue to be arranged by Vassili.

The following meeting will be Tuesday September 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The Agenda, even if only in Draft, and the Notice of the Meeting should be circulated at least 7 days prior to the meeting.

The AGM will be held in November (date to be determined by Vassili to avoid any clashes with other Council meetings).

Meetings are held at 7pm because they can last for 2 hours.

2. There was some discussion as to whether or not we were quorate. The Constitution is under some discussion (see below) and under the terms of that Constitution we were not quorate on this occasion. We continued the meeting because we were not taking what might be described as “major” decisions. We appreciated that such decisions would need to be deferred to another day.

### 3. Reports from Officers.

John (Treasurer) had sent a financial report electronically.

Thus:

Financial report:

Since previous Committee meeting (February 2024).

#### Debit payments.

Arboricultural Society £75

Maelor Forest Nurseries £372

#### Credit payments.

Bristol City Council £50

#### Current Balance £994.90

John announces that this year's Tree Giveaway has successfully distributed another 800 trees, a mixture of pedunculate oak and downy birch.

We have just heard that the Baltic Wharf planning meeting has been postponed from the 24th April, and also that the Environment Agency has just withdrawn its previous objection to the development on flooding grounds.

### 3. Chris Wallace:

Developing the roles of Tree Champions (TCs):

The Tree Champion Event had been arranged for Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at Stoke Lodge Adult Education Centre, Shirehampton Road, BS9 1BN. 0930 to 1315.

Programme:

9:30 - Coffee/Tea

9:45 - Welcome (Mark, Chris)

10:00 Introductions and aspirations for the morning

10:15 - 20 minute sessions:

1. Chris: Online support and Trees of Bristol
2. Mark: Introduction to Trees and Biodiversity Gain (BG)
3. Sean: Tree care
- 11.15 - Break and networking
- 11:45 - 20 minute sessions:
4. Vassili: History of BTF, meetings and work on the constitution
5. Stephanie: Planning applications for Dummies
- Lightning talks (5 minutes) e.g. Jim on FON, John on Tree Giveaway, any TCs wishing to speak.
- Panel Q & A (BCC tree officer to be invited)
- 13:15 - Finish

Chris is going to send another email to our current “signed up” TCs (26 = 17 + 9 Committee) reminding them of the Half Day Event.

Chris asked that if any TC should contact one of us in a matter, such as tree care or planning, that we should notify Chris so he can keep a track of activities.

We belong to the Arboricultural Association. We have access to their Tutorial videos through Chris after the tutorial has been presented.

Plymouth Tree People have been helpful with regard to us improving our Constitution. They are a Volunteer Run Charity.

With regard to obtaining funding etc we get asked about our Constitution - Safeguarding, Dealing with Incidents, Code of Conduct etc. This has been the driver for our current overhaul of our Constitution.

Chris has developed a web-based Planning Awareness Centre which he will present at the half day event.

Chris has a meeting with Richard Ennion, BCC Officer (Horticultural Service Manager) next Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April. Please email any issues you want discussed to Chris before then.

#### 4. Discussions on our Constitution:

We need to adapt our current Constitution and update it to fit current needs so that it is fit for any affiliations we might want or any bids for funds we might want to make.

Some of this discussion with regard to some inclusions required is included in No 3 above. Should we become an unregistered Charity, or a Volunteer run Charity?

Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are obviously Officers, but what other roles, if any, should we include?

What constitutes “The Committee”

Who is eligible to be a Member?

Who is eligible to vote?

How might we terminate a membership?

How many meetings should we hold?

What is a quorum?

Also - not as part of the Constitution but allied to the need to improve it - we must explore Public Liability Insurance. If we are to take people on Tree Trail walks for example, we need such a thing. We nominated Vassili to do that!

The current Committee of the BTF meetings is asked to study the documents sent by Mark by email on 8<sup>th</sup> April. Safeguarding Policy; Procedure for dealing with incidents; BTF Code of Conduct; BTF Constitution Draft and to comment on it with suggestions by email please. We hope to ratify the new Constitution at the AGM in November.

One particular question to answer: Do BTF Members pay a subscription so that we can afford the Public Liability Insurance?

5. Matters Arising:

Jim reported that he is still trying to acquire a share in another organisation's table at the Festival of Nature, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> June. He has approached someone who will approach Forest of Avon Trust, which seems the natural one to approach. Mark and Chris suggested that they approach FoAT directly and this was agreed by Jim.

Jim has been in touch with the Vicar for the families of the victims of the South Bristol stabbings. He has offered to help the Vicar should the families want to know how to sponsor trees. The BTF is not going to get directly involved.

6. AOB:

Stephanie and Mark mentioned that they had both, two days ago, been asked by the Kings Weston Action Group to review a Planning Application for development at the Shirehampton Football Club. There appears to the KWAG and others to have been breaches of Planning Regulations some of which may directly adversely affect trees. These have been the subject of a complaint to Planning Enforcement whose response so far has been rather dismissive. Julian suggested we approached the Club management directly, but Mark and Stephanie doubted the suitability of that.

7. Date of next meeting: 3<sup>rd</sup> June

8. Action Points: Please read (copied from body of Minutes)

Stephanie French. 11<sup>th</sup> April 2024