



Bristol Tree Forum meeting minutes

Filwood Community Centre 20 September 2024

Apologies, Sean Harding, Paul Sander Jackson, Anne Silber, Jim Smith (Vice Chair).

Mark Ashdown (Chair), Stephanie French, Vassili Papastavrou (Secretary) John Tarlton (Treasurer), Chris Wallace (Tree Champion coordinator and datasmith). Tree Champions: Simon Bishop, Luke Cooper, Sue Holden, Angela Truell.

1. Date and Place of next meeting (see under AGM)

The next meeting will be the AGM: it was decided that it would be held in the second half of November in City Hall (subsequent to the meeting the date was confirmed as Monday 25th November in City Hall 6pm - 8pm).

2. Progress on Action points

Little progress had been on many of the action points of the last meeting perhaps because it was the summer holiday period. The key Action Points were discussed further in this meeting and are mentioned again.

3. Reports from Officers

John Tarlton reported that there is £790 remaining in the account. There was a brief discussion regarding fundraising which has become urgent, as our current funds will last less than a year. The following possibilities were mentioned - Ovo Energy, Burgess Salmon and Triodos. Simon offered to follow up with Triodos.

Over the summer there had been three meetings which were reported on:

Vassili and Mark met with the BCC Tree and Woodlands manager. As ever this was a positive meeting and information on a number of topics was shared. It seems that ash dieback is proceeding more slowly in the Bristol area than elsewhere.

In addition, Mark, Stephanie and John met with the Chief Planner and discussed a number of ongoing concerns. On a positive note, it seems that there is a desire to keep biodiversity compensation local to the development, in other words as "close as possible".

Finally, there was a meeting with some members of the Green party.

Vassili and Chris had also become involved in the "Notice This Tree" Bristol event. It was an art-based celebration of existing urban trees, whilst also mourning the loss of important trees around the country. This was the 6th city that Notice This Tree has conducted what they describe as interventions.



4. The Draft Constitution and the proposed Safeguarding Policy were briefly discussed with a view to adopting them at the AGM.

Action point: Vassili will tidy up drafts and Chris will then circulate to Tree Champions.

5. Preparation for AGM. Finding a new chair.

It was decided that the AGM would be held in the second half of November in City Hall (date to be confirmed). It was suggested that we ask someone from the Woodland Trust to speak on the tree Equity Score.

We need to offer to mentor the next possible chair. The role of the chair is not necessarily that onerous but we will need to mentor a new chair.

Action points: Vassili to draft email to be sent out to the Tree champions asking people to consider becoming chair. Vassili to confirm AGM date with Councillor Varney. Mark to find a speaker for the AGM.

6. Bristol Tree Strategy.

The strategy has little to say about the need to protect important existing trees and what could be done to achieve this. In addition, the proposed increase in canopy cover by 2040 is only 1.8%. BTF submitted a statement to the meeting which adopted the strategy on 26th September. However, the strategy contains the idea of setting up a Tree Partnership Group and it is hoped that the BTF can play an active part in this group.

7. Newsletter Update. Unfortunately, Louise will have to leave as newsletter editor.

Action Point: Chris will look into how to retain the mailing list and keep this important publication alive. We are looking for a new newsletter editor.

8. Tree Champions. Chris reported that he has been away for much of the summer and there had been little progress during the holiday period. There was agreement that the next session with Tree Champions should be on street trees and their care, Perhaps in Stoke Lodge Feb half term of 2025.

Action point: Chris, Sean and Stephanie to organise.

9 Any other business

There was a varied discussion under any other business.

It was agreed that we need a page on the website which looks at past campaigns and lessons learned.

Action point: Vassili will construct a brief summary of our major campaigns and possible lessons learned.

Stephanie also drew our attention to the Merrimans National biking centre which will result in the removal of many trees. Planning application is likely to come in between Jan - April 2025.

John Tarlton mentioned the [Baltic wharf tree brides wedding anniversary](#)



This event took place on the Harbourside by Baltic Wharf, and was well attended by around 40 Tree Brides and supporters. John and Jim both made speeches in support of the Baltic Wharf trees and urban trees in general. John described the current state of the campaign, outlining the plan to put forward an alternative plan for a community park, and to “call in” the planning consent on numerous grounds.

Vassili Papastavrou 10 October 2024