



Manor Woods Valley Group

Quarterly Open Forum Meeting

Tuesday 7th September, 19:00 via Zoom

Draft September 2021 meeting minutes

Attendees: Adrianna, André, Beryl, Caroline, Danny, Jennie, Julia, Marie Jo, Peter, Racheal, Rea
Apologies: Clive, Davina, Maggie, Sophie

1. Welcome and introductions

2. Bristol's Ecological Emergency Action Plan

- Martin introduced the recently published Bristol City Council (BCC) Ecological Emergency Action Plan. The purpose of the plan is to demonstrate the council's commitment to the One City Ecological Emergency Strategy, support partners (such as Avon Wildlife Trust, Forest of Avon Trust and Manor Woods Valley Group (MWVG)), support citizens and to develop to baseline evidence to support decisions.
- Actions from the document that are relevant to MWVG include Community Grant Scheme, survey to contribute to nature friendly food growing, renewing the Parks and Green Space Strategy, changing the operational management of green spaces to benefit nature, sharing data, engaging citizens and feeding into the councils Ecological Emergency webpage.

3. Development plans on local green spaces

- André provided an update on Hartcliffe Way waste and recycling centre; including proposal to replace the (vehicle number plate recognition system will be replaced by a pre-booking system (which could have implications for local fly-tipping).
- Peter summarised the plans earmarked for the development of green field sites in south Bristol that are ecologically connected to MWV. These are Ashton Gate, Yew Tree Farm, The Novers and Western Slopes. MWVG have released a position statement on these developments, referencing ecological policy from One City Plan, Climate and Ecological Emergencies strategy documents and West of England Nature Partnership (WENP) Nature Recovery Network.
- The Novers: Peter produced a critique of the developer's ecology report, highlighting shortcomings including failure to link up with WENP nature recovery network.
- Western Slopes: Challenged by local residents and Avon Wildlife Trust, who say that declaration of ecological emergency postdates the 2014 Local Plan and so there should not be development in that area.
- Yew Tree Farm: Martin and Rachel reported on recent comments by the Bristol Mayor which appear to show that he would object to this development, although it's unclear if this will have an effect as it is not council property.
- Peter has formally objected, on behalf of MWVG, to the planning application for the Ashton Vale site and Martin submitted a statement in support of the motion to protect Bristol's green spaces that was debated at the full council meeting on 7th September.

4. Update on our Forest School initiative

- Martin and Jennie updated the meeting on successful pilot scheme. The application for funding from the Big Lottery Community Fund was unsuccessful and we are awaiting response from Bristol and Bath Parks Foundation Scheme to find out if funding for funding from them has been granted.

5. Treasurer's report

- Martin delivered the report in Davina's absence. Since the last meeting a donation from South Bristol Garden Club of £60 has been received (following a guided tour for members led by Peter). Expenditure has been £360 for the forest school pilot. A balance of £5,181.22 remains available for projects including the orchard, Slow-worms, woodland path and exercise trail.

6. Brief report on activities since the last meeting

- Peter unveiled the new name for the planted woodland, Hope Wood, suggested by Vicky Smith. Most saplings are thriving, a baseline survey has been conducted and bindweed and ant nests have been cleared on multiple occasions.
- Exercise trail: Four posts have been installed and more to be installed in the coming weeks.
ACTION: Plan a launch event.
- Surveys: Recent surveys of bees, butterflies, and oak tree surveys have been conducted.
- Habitat management: There have been several sessions of Himalayan Balsam clearance, which takes less time each year; overgrown vegetation through the Riverside Path, Rabbit Field paths and Manor Woods Orchard has been cleared and rubbish pulled from the Malago.
- Thanks given to people picking litter, it's noticed by the park users. Large Wildflower Meadow has had its annual cut, on time this year.
- Water pollution concerns due to changes to colour and smell of water. If suspected pollution, report it to the Environment Agency hotline: 0800 907060
- Clive has been involved in promoting MWV for social prescribing, attending online events and learning about local grants award schemes.

7. Priorities and plans for our volunteering activities for the autumn and winter

- Complete the 2.5k exercise trail
- Rake and remove the cut grass from Valley Heights Wildflower Meadow
- Keep the paths through the Manor Woods Orchard clear and ready for apple and pear picking
- Harvest fruit for Manor Woods Orchard Apple Juice
- Carry out running repairs in Hope Wood
- Keep Manor Woods Valley free of litter and the Malago free of shopping trolleys
- Cut and install logs for seating in The Classroom
- Manage the fruit trees in the orchard and plant twelve more

8. Matters arising from previous meetings

- Access to MWV for mobility scooters, wheelchairs and pushchairs: Martin is waiting for council to provide cost estimates for the changes and then MWVG can applied for CIL funding. Action from council

to install two benches is still pending.

9. Open Forum: Information exchange, suggestions, issues etc.

- On Margaret's behalf, Martin mentioned that the ownership of Zion will change. A public meeting on the future of Zion will be held there on October 11th.
- Martin asked for a volunteer to take on a 2022 or 2023 calendar project.

10. Date of next meeting - Wednesday 8th December 2021

- Fallback position will be on Zoom, but if there is an opportunity, plan face to face.

11. Actions

Topic	Action
Bristol's Ecological Emergency Action Plan	André raised concerns over renewing Parks and Green Spaces Strategy. Martin agreed to raise at the next Bristol Parks Forum meeting.
Bristol's Ecological Emergency Action Plan	Jennie has offered to explore new connections with Avon Wildlife Trust following the departure of MWV Group's existing contact.
Bristol's Ecological Emergency Action Plan	Committee to draft proposals on how specific actions in the plan could support our work and to discuss these with BCC and BPF.
Development plans on local green spaces	MWVG to use our 'position statement' as the basis for objections to any future plans for building on green sites in Bristol.
Development plans on local green spaces	Caroline raised concern over Crox Bottom designation as it has been reported to her that it has recently been downgraded.
Forest School	A modified application of Nation Lottery Community Fund will be submitted following their feedback from an unsuccessful initial attempt.