

Manor Woods Valley Group 7th Annual General Meeting 14-Jun-25

Meeting held in Manor Woods Valley

Attendees:

Committee members: Peter Loy-Hancocks, Martin Grant, Adriana Moraru, Tom Pearce, Maggie Evans

Other attendees: Margaret, Helen, Deb

Apologies: Jay Croney, Clive Weston, Davina Blake

No	Topic																																																									
1.	<p>Statement by the retiring chair</p> <p>Peter welcomed everyone and shared the agenda. This year's meeting was held in Manor Woods Valley. The topics on the agenda were discussed during the first part of the meeting. This was followed by a walk around the site.</p> <p>The meeting started with Peter's statement. He has been the group's chair for three years and, according to the terms of the MWVG constitution, must step down and a new chair be elected. At the same time, for personal reasons, Martin is stepping down from his role as volunteering coordinator.</p> <p>The statement was followed by the review of MWVG priority activities plan for 2025/6.</p>																																																									
2.	<p>MWVG Priority Activities Plan 2025/6</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th> <th>Task</th> <th>Responsible</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2025</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jun/Jul/Aug</td> <td>Butterfly Survey</td> <td>Peter (MWVG)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June</td> <td>Glowworm survey</td> <td>Peter (MWVG)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>July</td> <td>Path clearing</td> <td>Rachel (Your Park)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>July & August</td> <td>Himalayan Balsam pull</td> <td>Peter (MWVG)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>August</td> <td>Vegetation management</td> <td>Rachel (Your Park)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>September</td> <td>Bramble bashing</td> <td>Rachel (Your Park)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Autumn</td> <td>Foraging Event</td> <td>Helen (Malago Medicinals)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Autumn/Winter</td> <td>Raking and Scarifying Cut Meadows</td> <td>Rachel (Your Park)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>October</td> <td>Apple Harvest</td> <td>Peter (MWVG)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>November</td> <td>Bramble bashing</td> <td>Rachel (Your Park)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nov-Jan</td> <td>Bristol Uni projects</td> <td>Peter (MWVG)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>December</td> <td>Orchard prep for wassail</td> <td>Rachel (Your Park)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Monthly</td> <td>Riverfly Monitoring</td> <td>Peter (MWVG)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alternate months</td> <td>Litter picking</td> <td>Tom (MWVG)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alternate months</td> <td>Wellbeing walks</td> <td>Clive (MWVG)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Quarterly</td> <td>Parks Forum Mtg</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>School Holidays</td> <td>Forest School</td> <td>Jay (MWVG)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Date	Task	Responsible	2025			Jun/Jul/Aug	Butterfly Survey	Peter (MWVG)	June	Glowworm survey	Peter (MWVG)	July	Path clearing	Rachel (Your Park)	July & August	Himalayan Balsam pull	Peter (MWVG)	August	Vegetation management	Rachel (Your Park)	September	Bramble bashing	Rachel (Your Park)	Autumn	Foraging Event	Helen (Malago Medicinals)	Autumn/Winter	Raking and Scarifying Cut Meadows	Rachel (Your Park)	October	Apple Harvest	Peter (MWVG)	November	Bramble bashing	Rachel (Your Park)	Nov-Jan	Bristol Uni projects	Peter (MWVG)	December	Orchard prep for wassail	Rachel (Your Park)	Monthly	Riverfly Monitoring	Peter (MWVG)	Alternate months	Litter picking	Tom (MWVG)	Alternate months	Wellbeing walks	Clive (MWVG)	Quarterly	Parks Forum Mtg		School Holidays	Forest School	Jay (MWVG)
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Various	Ad hoc guided walks	Peter (MWVG)
winter to spring	Ad hoc ree planting	Peter (MWVG)
all months	Communications	Martin (MWVG)
all months	co-ordinating activities	
Occasionally	Representing MWVG at events	
2026		
January	Orchard prep for wassail	
January	Wassail	Peter (MWVG)
February	Orchard triangle raking	
March	Rabbit Field raking	
Spring	Foraging Event	Helen (Malago Medicinals)
April	Vegetation management	
April	Apple Blossom Day	
May	JKW survey	Peter (MWVG)
May	Path clearance/Bramble bashing	
June	AGM	

Volunteering event
Public event
Regular survey
Chair's responsibility
Unallocated

Peter will continue with the wildlife surveys; however, most of the upcoming work parties for 2025 will be led by Rachel from Your Park (to be confirmed if she will continue in 2026), Tom will continue with the litter picking sessions, Clive - wellbeing walks, Martin – communications.

Jay has set up his own organisation called Natural Networks and will continue to organise Forest School sessions on site, independently from MWVG.

Peter highlighted the activities which were part of the chair's responsibilities, with a note that the quarterly Parks Forum meetings are not mandatory to attend but a great opportunity to share ideas with other volunteering groups.

Maggie asked if Good Gym will continue joining the volunteering sessions in MWV, Martin confirmed he'll continue engaging with them.

3. Minutes of last AGM on 22-Jun-24
No questions or corrections, minutes agreed.

4. Our money – treasurer's report

Date	Amount	Description	Balance after transaction
4/6/2024	-62.40	Website annual fee	6,453.91
5/6/2024	-368.94	Forest School	6,084.97
5/6/2024	-325.00	Forest School	5,759.97
5/6/2024	-132.00	Forest School	5,627.97
12/6/2024	-51.00	Forest School	5,576.97
14/6/2024	-314.00	Forest School	5,262.97

	17/6/2024	-0.30	Bank charges	5,262.67
	28/6/2024	-29.99	Equipment	5,232.68
	12/7/2024	-69.00	Forest School	5,163.68
	15/7/2024	-0.50	Bank charges	5,163.18
	15/8/2024	-0.10	Bank charges	5,163.08
	5/11/2024	-281.00	Forest School	4,882.08
	24/11/2024	-204.00	Forest School	4,678.08
	2/12/2024	-102.00	Forest School	4,576.08
	16/12/2024	-0.20	Bank Charges	4,575.88
	13/1/2025	-138.00	Forest School	4,437.88
	15/1/2025	-0.10	Bank Charges	4,437.78
	17/2/2025	-0.10	Bank Charges	4,437.68
	13/3/2025	-198.00	Forest School	4,239.68
	7/4/2025	-119.00	Forest School	4,120.68
	7/4/2025	-201.32	Forest School	3,919.36
	15/4/2025	-0.10	Bank Charges	3,919.26
	24/4/2025	10.00	Talk donation	3,929.26
	24/4/2025	20.00	Talk donation	3,949.26
	27/4/2025	-62.40	website annual fee	3,886.86
	15/5/2025	-0.80	Bank Charges	3,886.06
	<u>June 2024/May 2025 incl. Summary</u>			
	June 2024 Start Balance: £6516.31			
	Income June 2024 to May 2025 incl. : £48.80 (Donations - £18.80 from wassail, £30.00 from Headley Park coffee morning for talk)			
	Expenditure June 2024 to May 2025 incl.: £2679.05 (Forest School £2503.26, bank charges £2.20, equipment £29.99, wassail refreshments £18.80, website £124.80)			
	May 2026 End Balance: £3886.06			
5.	Elections of chair, secretary and treasurer			
	As mentioned at the beginning of the meeting, Peter is retiring as chair and Martin as volunteer coordinator. Everyone thanked them for their hard work and dedication to the group.			
	Clive tended his resignation from the committee but will continue organising the Wellbeing walks for now and attend volunteering sessions when possible.			
	Peter formally nominated Tom Pearce as chair, seconded by Helen. Tom was elected as chair of the MWVG.			
	Davina will continue in her role as treasurer, and Adriana as secretary.			
6.	Highlights of 24/25			
	This was a slightly quieter year, there was lots of public volunteering activity, but no UWE student involvement. This review gives only a flavour of our work over the past 12 months; for a more complete record see our Facebook page.			
	Thanks for the support:			
	We are enormously grateful to the many organisations that have supported us throughout the year with the activities and events summarised below: Bristol City Council Parks Services,			

Forest of Avon Trust, West of England Combined Authority, Bristol GoodGym, University of Bristol students, Bristol Parks Forum and especially Your Park Bristol.

As always, we are especially grateful for the volunteering support of local residents who have contributed a lot of time and effort in helping to maintain and improve Manor Woods Valley for the benefit of wildlife and people, and are good company and fun to be with.

Habitat Management:

Manor Woods Valley remains probably one of the most biodiverse areas in Bristol (various woodland types, Manor Woods Orchard and other small areas of fruit trees, several different wildflower meadows and the Malago). Managing, and arguably, improving these habitats should be a priority, particularly in response to the ecological emergency. This year we again focussed on cutting back Brambles in Manor Woods Orchard, The Orchard Triangle and The Rabbit Field, and raking arisings from wildflower meadows.

Flowers and Animals:

We updated our annual butterfly report and took part in two moth surveys organised by the Bristol and District Moth Group. The latter recorded 37 and 54 species on the respective survey nights. A report on the 'Moths of Manor Woods Valley' is being prepared. We undertook another Glow-worm survey and updated our report accordingly.

Orchard Activities:

Due to lack of apples, we didn't harvest any from Manor Woods Orchard in 2024. Our January Wassail was extremely well attended, with an estimated 150+ people attending. We were entertained by the Hartcliffe and Withywood Community Choir, and partook of apple juice and apple cake whilst thanking the trees for the bounty and scaring away evil spirits to ensure a good crop this year.

The fruit trees planted over the past few years continue to thrive and are starting to fruit.

Non-native Invasive Weeds:

Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam is present in Manor Woods Valley. We passed the results of our annual survey of the former to the Parks Services, who treat it with herbicide. Each year we also remove any Himalayan Balsam that we find along the Malago. This invasive plant is now hard to find and will likely be eradicated in the very near future.

Litter Picking:

Manor Woods Valley is a relatively clean place to walk and play in and is a safer place for wildlife, thanks to the care taken by the vast majority of users of the nature reserve and a dedicated band of regular litter-pickers. We continue to supply free litter pickers to those who ask for them. This has proved a great success. Committee member, Tom Pearce, is dedicated to running regular litter pick events. Dog fouling and fly tipping continue to present health hazards to people and wildlife. The previously reported fly tipping of large quantities of car tyres into the Malago near to the Vale Lane entrance appears to have ceased.

Wellbeing:

Our wellbeing co-ordinator, Clive Weston, has run a monthly series of his well-received 'quiet and thoughtful' walks every month throughout the year.

Thanks to funding received from Quartet's BYCA grant, regular Forest School sessions, led by Jay Croney were run in Manor Woods Valley throughout the year. Children were actively engaged in a variety of outdoor play and forest school activities, including, shelter building, adventure play, whittling, fire building and outdoor cooking and much more. These activities not only provided endless fun but also helped the children develop essential skills and a deeper connection with nature.

	<p>The new accessibility friendly barrier, funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) have been promised by BCC, but have still not been installed, despite another assurance that this will happen ‘in the near future’.</p> <p>Other Activities:</p> <p>Due to the number of scooters being dumped into the Malago, we successfully campaigned for removal of the electric scooter parking place outside the St Peters Rise entrance to the site.</p> <p>We put a tree up at the annual St Mart Redcliffe church Christmas Tree Fest. The tree was made of natural materials collected from Manor Woods Valley by Forest School attendees. There was another ‘emergency planting of trees, this time of young Oaks donated by a nurse in Calne from a cancelled order. Over 100 were planted under the Ash trees in New Manor Wood. Despite a very dry spring there seems to have been a decent survival rate. It is hoped that these trees will help to replace the Ash trees that are dying due to Ash Die-back disease.</p> <p>2024-25 The Year in Numbers</p> <p>355 total hours of volunteering on site (equivalent to 50 person days) excluding surveys, guided walks and ad hoc litter picks and routine maintenance - down from 515</p> <p>55 volunteers (including Good Gym) - down from 69+ total volunteers</p> <p>0 hours of student volunteering - down from 216</p> <p>0 active student volunteers - down from 13</p> <p>18 total volunteering work parties - down from 40</p> <p>0 student volunteering work parties - down from 11</p> <p>13 - guided walks – unchanged</p> <p>1700 Facebook followers - up from 1645</p> <p>331 members (supporters on mailing list) - down from 338</p> <p>£48.80 - income – down from £3629.52</p> <p>£3886.06 - bank balance start June 2025 down from £6516.31 bank balance end May 2024</p> <p>£2679.05 - expenditure - up from £1753.68</p> <p>0 - bottles of apple juice made – down from 96</p> <p>0 - bottles of apple juice delivered to Withywood Food Bank – down from 48</p> <p>150+ - people attending wassail – unchanged</p> <p>100 – Oak trees planted in New Manor Wood</p> <p>There were no student volunteer sessions this year as the new UWE student organiser did not liaise with Peter.</p>
7.	<p>Future plans</p> <p>Already covered by the MWVG activities plan, see above.</p> <p>Peter mentioned that a tool shed will be installed by the BCC Park’s department behind the Bishopsworth Library. The key will be shared with whomever is able to lead work parties in MWV for easy access to all tools required.</p>
8.	<p>Sharing ideas</p> <p>Peter emphasized that the priority for the group should remain the orchard as the brambles will take over if not kept under control.</p> <p>Helen suggested using ‘engagement time’ (multiply the number of people attending volunteering sessions by the time spent on site) if the group wants to apply for funding in the future.</p> <p>There were issues with the grass not being collected by the contractor who mowed the big wildflower meadow last year. The BCC assured Peter that this will not happen this year.</p> <p>Martin mentioned that the BCC has published a paper on their website about wildflower meadow management.</p>

9.	Date and time of next meeting June 2026 details TBC
10	A walk around Manor Woods Valley