

10 January 2023 Minutes

Attendance

Alex Dunn (SusWoT), **Liz Viggars** (SusWoT), **Alastair Blackwell** (Friends of Blaise), **Bryony Cole** (Sea Mills and Coombe Dingle Climate Action Group), **Zac Jones** (SMCDCAG), **Di Bunniss** (Friends of Blaise), **Peter Coleman Smith** (SusWoT), **Frances Robertson** (Friends of Badock's Wood),

Apologies

Roger Moses (Friends of Badock's Wood), **Nikki Jones** (Friends of Sea Mills Meadows)

Water Voles and Otters in the River Trym Project

SusWoT has been awarded a £900 grant from the Bristol and Avon Catchment Partnership. Peter Coleman Smith is leading the project which has three main areas:

- a formal survey of the area to see if and where they can be found already
- assess the environment and what could be done to enhance it
- train observers

Peter has obtained a list of schools from Frances and will email them in the next couple of days. It was suggested he also contact Elmfield school. Target age group: late primary.

Peter's initial article has been published in the Henleaze and Westbury Voice.

Action: Alex to send Peter copy of Henleaze and Westbury Voice publication to include in project documentation

Bird Song Training

Roger proposed to extend his Bird Song Training programme this year and suggested 3 sessions at the end of March. These would consist of a 1 hour talk indoors followed by a 1 hour walk outside. Roger and Di could lead the sessions.

The Greenway centre could be used for a Saturday morning at Greenway centre – FOBW get preferential rates.

Actions: Liz to speak to Jono about holding session at Wildlife park. Bryony to speak to Elena/Heather about further session at Methodist Church

Council Cuts to Parks

25% of the Parks budget is due to be cut and BCC has issued a consultation and individual groups within TroutintheTrym had responded.

Frances disagreed that there was little that could be done to prevent these cuts. There have been substantial real terms cuts meaning the service was already bare-boned.

Blaise Silt Traps

Alistair had caught up with Caroline from Parks. She is not expecting cuts to be implemented this year and is looking to schedule the Silt Trap work within the next three months. A longer-term plan is needed for de-silting the ponds.

River Cleaning and Litter Picking

SusWoT continues to run twice-weekly river-cleaning sessions. Parks are sending a truck to the end of the Friday sessions and they collect Sunday's haul on Mondays. Parks weigh the rubbish – and we are currently clearing over 1 tonne per week. A lot of this is historic and includes bricks and rubble. There had been particular problems recently with trolleys from Aldi being deposited en masse into Hazel Brook. We should see if Mark Weston could approach Aldi about this issue.

There has been little organised litter-picking in Badocks Wood recently. Liz offered to contact Sarah Hudson to discuss how best to restart regular sessions.

SMCDCAG and Friends of Sea Mills Meadows are carrying on monthly litter picks. Note that Sea Mills Meadow extends to the Dingle Bridge (the 'Graffiti bridge' half way between Shirehampton Road and the Dingle Car Park at Blaise)

It was noted that litter picks are being organised under the banner of Sustainable Henleaze. Frances still has the email address for Sustainable Henleaze. Alex to mention this to Monique.

Himalayan Balsam – no update

Limited Balsam was found this year and was kept under control by a small number of volunteers – both individually and as part of the SusWoT Friday and Sunday sessions. Unfortunately some was identified late in the season that had set seed. Liz will map these areas and make sure that they get sufficient early attention next season.

Pollution

Peter has been contacting local politicians (Kye Dudd, Darren Jones, Mark Weston etc) to raise the issue about pollution. The Green Party has made a formal members' statement to the Council.

Wessex water's new relief sewer should be in place by the end of 2023. It is hope this will ease issues with the CSOs – which are still causing issues.

Frances noted that the Trowbridge (Rd) main sewer takes surface water from a large area of Southmead – so while individual misconnections have been identified and

rectified, there are still regular issues with pollution entering the river at Trowbridge Road.

We need to continue to encourage pollution spotters to differentiate between different types of pollution and report them immediately. Liz and Alex to consider whether their reporting tools might be used for this purpose.