

11 April 2023 Minutes

Present

Roger Moses. Liz Viggars, Alastair Blackwell, Alex Dunn

Apologies

Peter Coleman-Smith

Water Quality

Peter has continued to engage with local politicians and had arranged a walk along Beehive Brook and the Southmead section of the Trym with Kye Dudd – local councillor for Southmead and Cabinet Member with responsibility for Climate, Ecology, Waste and Energy. Kye is now aware of the problems and the work that has been done. He will provide details of other groups who may be able to support our work in Southmead as Sustainable Southmead is no longer organising activities.

River Cleaning

Weekly sessions continue on Fridays and Sundays. These will be combined with Himalayan Balsam clearance over the summer. With the following exceptions all the Trym and Hazel Brook have been cleaned of litter once. Hazel Brook north of Crow Lane Open Space has not been tackled at all. There is about 400m of Hazel Brook at the top end of Crow Land Open Space that needs a further deep clean. Maintenance work is still required downstream as new rubbish is being deposited/exposed.

Action Alex will continue to organise River Cleaning events every Friday and most Sundays

Silt Traps

No real progress – but Alastair reported that Joe McKenna has agreed to take on the problem. Alastair and Joe are due to meet on 21 April at the Silt Traps – Joe will bring the key....

Festival of Nature

TitT have been invited by the [Natural History Consortium](#) to be part of their Festival of Nature which runs from 9 to 18 June. The Festival of Nature programme includes a 9 June SusWoT-hosted river cleaning/himalayan balsam session.

Actions: Alex and Liz to co-ordinate 9 June session. Roger and Alastair to consider linking with Friends of Badocks Wood / Friends of Blaise activities.

Water Voles and Otters

So far nine people have come forward to be trained, in mid April. A teacher from Westbury on Trym Primary School has become involved. Peter will do the training. A Bristol Avon River Trust person will do a survey and report. A budget report will need to go to Liz to comply with the conditions of the grant. Once again reports of voles have been received – this time in Badocks Wood – however these may be cases of mistaken identity.

WalkFest

We understand the walks have been submitted for this and all is in order. [Here is the walkfest website.](#)

Bird Song Training

One session took place at the Greenway Centre. It was disappointing that there wasn't a suitable venue around Sea Mills. Roger is prepared to offer further training events – the best time is April-May.

Reporting Tools

There has been progress on both our prototype apps which enable users to photograph issues and upload them to a central database and map with minimal effort. At the latest SusWoT meeting, WoTPlot was installed onto several volunteers' (Android) phones for wider testing and the university students' project is nearing completion. If we can encourage widespread adoption then this will help BCC, Wessex Water etc to tackle problems efficiently and enable us to plan our volunteer activities

Action: Liz and Alex Liaising with Matt and the Students

Himalayan Balsam

Individuals have started checking the usual problem areas – no Balsam has been found yet. We will continue to monitor throughout the summer and organise working parties as necessary. As we have had two serious years of elimination, we expect to find far less Balsam – however we do expect to find some nearer Cribbs Causeway – where Balsam was identified late last season.

Next Steps for the Trym

Now that a lot of the basic work to improve the Trym has been completed (clearing the historic rubbish, flytipping and Himalayan Balsam), we need to work out our next steps. Particular areas of focus include improving the banks – for example with planting and measures to prevent damage being caused by dogs.

We discussed whether it was better to organise meetings of interested parties or events that tackle certain elements straightaway. A combination of both is probably required.

Action: all to give further thought to how we progress.

Grants

New rounds of grants are available from the BACP – with a May 7 closing date. It is thought that a bid in respect of the work on the Silt Traps in Blaise and/or planting around the ponds would be worthwhile.

AOB

Ben Barkers ‘My Wild Bedminster’

Ben is looking for material for My Wild Bedminster. Ben has been directed to our website for material. It has been suggested that representatives for each of the groups might like to write a paragraph.