



BRIGHTON & HOVE
GREEN SPACES FORUM

BRIGHTON & HOVE GREEN SPACES FORUM EAST OF BRIGHTON MEMBER GROUPS MEETING

Date / Time – 18th May 2021 at 7pm

Venue – Virtual meeting using Zoom

Those Present:

Cliff Munn (Chair / Secretary) - Notes
James Newmarch (Committee member & B&H Wildlife Forum)
Hallam Thorley (The Triangle Plot)
Bernadette Skinner (Ovingdean Residents & Preservation)
Clare Millet-Hopkins (Woodingdean Wilderness)
Ellie Moulton (Woodingdean Wilderness)
Louise Arnold (FO Beacon Hill)

Apologies:

Alan Cooke (FO Craven Wood)
Jenni Creswell (Brighton Permaculture Trust – for Racehill Community Orchard)
Kirsty Sloman (Racehill Community Orchard)
Kerry Slater (Whitehawk Community Food Project)

Introductions & Group Updates.

Hallam introduced **the Triangle Plot** which provides an opportunity for therapeutic horticulture in Whitehawk. Social prescribing and its value was discussed, links with other Forum member groups like Plot 22 and Nurture through Nature were noted. The Triangle Plot were welcomed as the Forum's newest member group 😊

Louise gave an overview on some of the challenges **FO Beacon Hill** have been managing. They have been actively grazing the site and where possible carrying out activities such as scrub bashing. A particular issue for their site is 'Hoary Cress' which is very invasive and needs similar treatment to Ragwort. The group's main concern is limited numbers (6). **Cliff to gain clarity in when green space volunteer numbers can be increased.**

Bernadette reported on some wonderful work done by **Ovingdean Residents** and their community with hedge planting using whips from 'I dig trees'. She also shared some before and after photos of the A259 underpass re-decoration work that has been completed. The underpass has wildlife themed roundals which link it nicely with adjacent landscape. Challenges for this group include obtaining a Woodland tree preservation order, hedgehog highways and trying to encourage builders to include nest box bricks in new houses. The group have been working closely with Ben Carr who is the local farmer.

Clare and Ellie spoke about some of the activities that have been taking place with **Woodingdean Wilderness**, including a maps and memories history initiative. They are keen to develop relationships with other groups with initiatives like 'well being in nature' walking routes and wildlife corridors. Real enthusiasm here for developing a wellbeing and nature agenda for the group. The group have good support from CityParks Rangers.

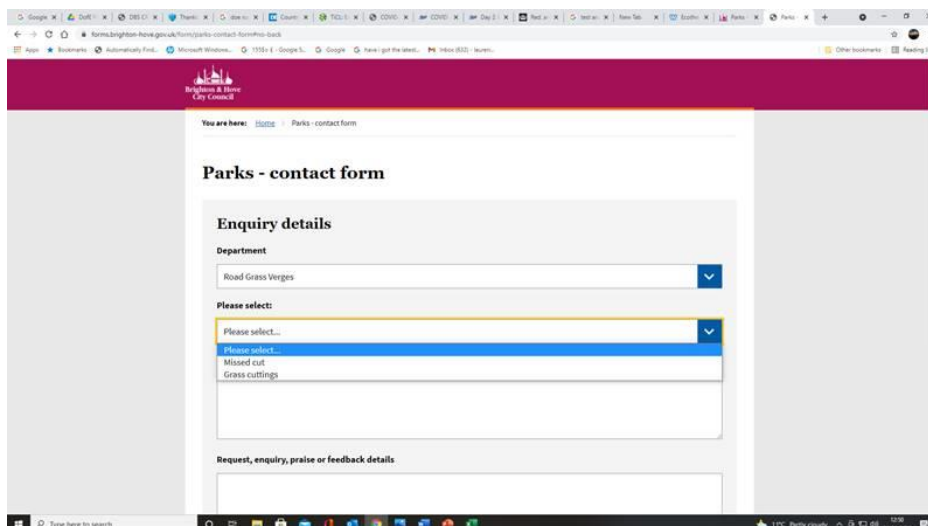
Matters arising

Ellie asked where they could find subject matter experts on things like wildflowers, bees and bats. Ideally to come out and visit / advise. The Forum is now more closely linked with **B&H Wildlife Forum** (through James) so requests of this type can be emailed into the Forum.

The '**wildflower conservation society**' are by far the best authority on chalk downland wildflowers. They are Forum members and propagate wildflowers in their poly tunnel at Stanmer. Their details can be found on the Forum member directory at <http://bhgreenspaceforum.org.uk/friends-of-groups/>

James gave an update on his work with **verges** and an initiative in certain parts of the city to stop cutting them. In particular James highlighted an online form on the B&H City Council web site which enables residents to request verges adjacent to their homes are not cut. This form can be found at https://selfservice.brighton-hove.gov.uk/AchieveForms/?mode=fill&consentMessage=yes&form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Form-12c2feac-63dc-4aa0-afbf-9a67a79b15f4/definition.json

Rather than a lone form it is part of a more general CityParks contact form, so you have to start with your personal info and work your way through until you can select road side verges. This then presents two options 'Missed Cut' and 'Grass Cuttings' – ignore these and request for cutting of your verge to stop in the following request box.



The importance of signs on uncut verges (to confirm that they are deliberately left uncut and why) was also discussed. It was agreed that the adoption of a standard sign across B&H would be good. **James to look for example uncut verge signs as part of the aforementioned initiative.**

Alan Cooke (**FO Craven Wood**) provided a written update:

Since last March we have held two sessions of up to six members, in December and May. As 'the Friend' of Craven Wood, I undertook as my lockdown task the clearance of all the bramble across the site, clearing the various plantations of apples, hazels, native trees and the meadow. That has now been completed, and the increased visits by the public to the wood during lockdown has been very gratifying. A couple have also been tending one of the small coppice areas and keeping that in good trim. We are all set to open up with 30 volunteers in June (if we're lucky!) and have set up a programme of step repairs and the clearance of a second meadow area. Last week, with the Ranger's assistance, we took down a diseased mature elm. Any unexpected challenges will be met head-on!

B&H Green Spaces Forum Update

Cliff gave an overview of Forum priorities including an Autumn seminar in September with the theme of 'how nature heals'. Newsletters were discussed – deadline for articles for the next one is the end of June. The last Newsletter included a new process for contacting B&H CityParks – see Spring Newsletter at <http://bhgreenspaceforum.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/NewsletterApril2021.pdf>

Cliff and James also reported on the Brighton & Hove Special trees initiative which has been launched by Forum committee member Vivienne Barton. Her special tree map has been supported by B&H City Council and is available in leaflet form as well as on-line here <https://ti.cl.me/Brighton/headlines/13814/view>

Please send any requests for the Special Trees of Brighton & Hove leaflet to the Forum at bhgsforum@gmail.com

Any Other Business

Cliff to identify the process for reporting full or broken dog poo bins, plus the process for requesting new installations.

Meeting Review

16 green space volunteer groups in the East of Brighton were invited to this meeting. 4 replied to say they were coming, 2 of those subsequently sent their apologies and 4 were eventually represented on the call (Woodingdean Wilderness, FO Beacon Hill, Ovingdean Residents and The Triangle Plot). Nevertheless all felt it was of great value to see one another, make connections and update on all the activity that has been happening. In particular the ability to talk in detail about the locality, share common issues and ideas.

For example linking up their areas (eg wildlife corridors). Having representation and expertise from the B&H Wildlife Forum was also much appreciated.

Another positive spin off was that our meeting invitation was shared with some groups who are currently not Forum members (eg The Triangle Plot and Whitehawk Community Allotment). All of these have been invited to join 😊

It was agreed that another similar meeting should be planned towards the end of the year.

Cliff Munn
Secretary - Brighton & Hove Green Spaces Forum